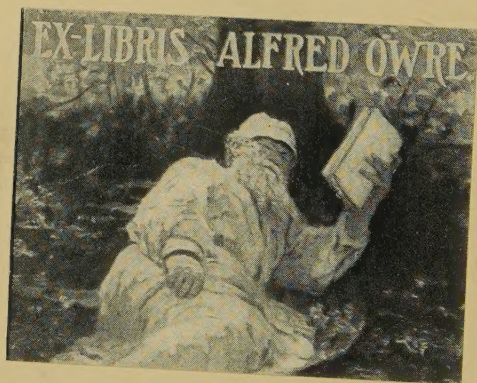




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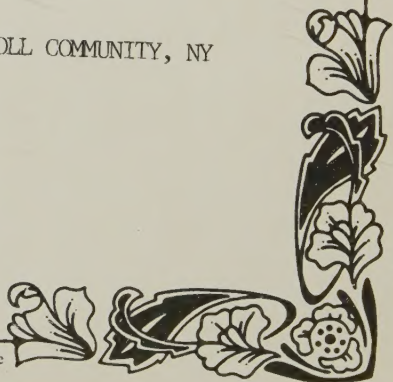
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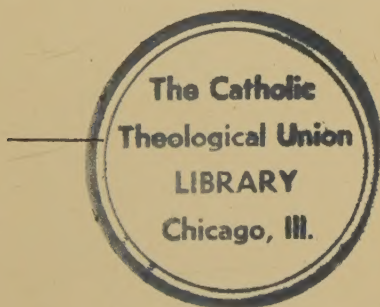
# PRINCE SIDDARTHA

## THE JAPANESE BUDDHA

*With an Introduction by Rev. F. E. Clark, D.D.*

BY

JOHN L. ATKINSON



BOSTON AND CHICAGO

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### Dedication

THE thought of the Young People of Christian Endeavor Societies everywhere has been constantly in my mind while preparing this book for the press. I, therefore, dedicate it to them with the sincere hope that its perusal may make clear to them *the vital difference* there is between the Light of Asia and the Light of the World.

JOHN L. ATKINSON.

KOBÉ, Japan.

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## INTRODUCTION

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IN many respects this is a very unusual book. While it has the interest of a story, it will be peculiarly fascinating to many minds because from the Oriental point of view it relates the life of a great religious leader, who bears sway over uncounted millions of our fellow men.

This book is not open to the charge of being colored by Western prejudices or preconceived Christian ideas, for it is a translation, not literal, to be sure, but substantially accurate, of the Japanese' own account of their greatest god. It speaks the best word that can be spoken for Buddha and Buddhism.

It presents the hero, whether he be a mythical or real character, in the most attractive light. The mellow haze of Oriental imagination covers up whatever is false and hideous in the religion of the East and presents that which is most worth studying.

As an account of the best things which a false religion can say for itself, it is well worth reading.

As an attempt to put us in sympathetic relation with the thought and aspirations of the devout souls in the far East it has a claim upon every Christian, but above all will it be of use, I believe, in showing every reader how infinitely superior the religion of Christ is to the best of false religions.

The light which sometimes shines from Asia is a false and flickering Jack-o'-lantern. Its uncertain rays may lead many a young person astray unless he traces it to its source and finds what a poor phosphorescent glow it is, after all, as compared with the light that shines from the Sun of Righteousness.

This book will set things in their true proportions before many who might otherwise be misled by the glamour of the Buddhist faith. After perusing these pages no intelligent person can say "One religion is as good as another"; "The faith of the Buddhist does not differ essentially from the faith of the Christian"; "The morality which Prince Siddartha taught is as good as the morality of Jesus Christ."

No one can compare the grotesque account of the birth of Buddha with the noble and dignified story of the birth of Christ to the advantage of the former. The quarrel of Maya and Kyodomi contrasts most unfavorably with the loving greetings of Mary and Elisabeth. The unnatural and priggish sayings and doings of Maya's son seem silly and absurd when compared with the sweet simplicity of Mary's son. And the last days of Prince Siddartha, his misty wisdom and his incomprehensible sayings, are sure to be contrasted by any reader with the dignified and noble death of Him who suffered on the cross to take away the sins of the world.

In fact this book is an excellent foil to the Gospels, as were the Apocryphal books of the Bible when they were bound up by our grandfathers between the covers of their Bibles. As at the recent great Parliament of Religions at Chicago it was said by more than one, "If this is the best thing that false religions have to say for themselves, Christianity need have no fear," so he who reads this most interesting volume will be sure to rise from his perusal with the feeling: If Buddhism has nothing better to offer to the world than the life of Prince Siddartha, the religion of Christ need not tremble.

FRANCIS E. CLARK.

BOSTON, October 10, 1893.



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## IN THE BEGINNING.

### PRELUDE.

THE following life of Prince Siddartha, the Japanese Buddha, is one that is used by the major part of the Buddhists of Japan. It was published two hundred and twenty-eight years ago, that is, in 1665, but whether that was the first time of its issue after its preparation by the original author I am unable to learn.

The present English text of this biography is not a literal translation of the Japanese work, yet it follows the original quite closely, and I believe that no important element has been omitted.

The Buddhists of Japan belong to what is called the Northern School of Buddhism. The Buddhists of the world are separated into two great divisions, called respectively the Southern School and the Northern School. The Northern School includes Northern India, Cashmere, Nepaul, China, Tibet, Mongolia, Korea, Japan. The Southern School includes Southern India, Ceylon, Burma, Siam. The Buddhism of the Northern School is regarded as being less correct in some of its teachings and usages than the Southern School. The reasons given for the difference and incorrectness are the greater distance from the origin of the religion, the additions that have been made to the original teachings of Buddha, and the retention of some of the teachings

and superstitions of the aboriginal religions of the peoples who came to adopt Buddhism as their national religion.

Buddhism reached Japan in the sixth century of the Christian era, namely, in 550 A.D. As it came by the way of China and Korea, its character in Japan is on the whole similar to that which it has or had in those two countries. In fact, the modern Buddhism of Japan, that is, the Buddhism taught since about the tenth century of the Christian era, was established by men who went to China to study the doctrines at what they regarded as first hand.

There is some doubt about the period of time during which the Buddha is said to have lived, taught, and died. Some writers have been inclined to regard him as a myth, as a creature of the imagination. It seems quite probable, however, that a person called Shākā-Mūni Gautama, otherwise Buddha, did really exist, and that he taught the doctrines that for substance are credited to him in the Buddhistic writings. It is more than probable, however, that the bulk of those writings and teachings were produced, after Buddha's death, by his followers, all of whom had not the same understanding of the germ thoughts of their teacher.

Granting that the Buddha was a real person and that he taught as is represented, there is still considerable difference of opinion as to the exact time of his birth and death. One Chinese account places the time at nine hundred and fifty years before Christ. The Buddhists of Ceylon, that is, the Southern School, place it at about five hundred and fifty years before Christ. Until recently,



European scholars have accepted the opinion of the Ceylon believers as representing the probable truth. Within recent years, however, some very old inscriptions have been found in India which seem to indicate that the Buddha died about 275 B.C.

The one thing about the whole matter that seems fairly certain is that Buddhism had its origin in India somewhere between 300 and 550 B.C., and that it spread from its place of birth throughout the entire Asiatic continent, east, north, and south.

The Buddhist scriptures were not collected and printed until some hundreds of years after the death of the founder of the religion, and there is no evidence that any biography of Buddha was extant or known before the other writings were published. It naturally follows, therefore, that neither this nor any other biography of the Buddha represents the unadulterated facts of his life, work, and death. All the lives of him that have been written are more or less legendary and imaginative in their character.

This particular biography to which the reader's attention is now invited represents the substance of a work called in Japanese *Shäkü Hasso Mono Gatari*. It is regarded as the best life of Buddha extant in Japan. As such it has been widely read, and it is believed by millions to represent the real facts in the case — quite as much so as any Christian biography of Christ is regarded by Christians as representing the facts of that sacred and useful life. Its perusal, therefore, by the young people of America, while it will reveal to them something of the vast difference that there is between the teachings

of Buddha and those of Christ, will bring them, I trust, into more sympathetic relations with the followers of this great and, no doubt, compassionate teacher. I trust, also, that it may incline them to be more earnest in bringing to the attention of those millions throughout the Orient who now accept the gloomy and depressing teachings of Buddha the more helpful, more uplifting, and better tidings which Jesus taught.

I have found some marked differences between this particular life of Buddha and the lives which have come to us through the writings of missionaries, poets, and other writers who have lived and studied Buddhism in India or Ceylon. The difference in one or two particulars is so great that I made a call at a large Buddhist temple that is within half a mile of my home in Kobé, in order to inquire of the priests there as to their understanding of the incidents represented in this *Hasso Mono Gatari*. The information thus obtained will be found in the chapter entitled "The Buddha's Enlightenment."

Buddha is invariably spoken of in Japan as Shäkä or as Shäkä-Müni. This accounts for the Japanese title of the book — *Shäkä Hasso Mono Gatari*.

The picture on the cover of the book represents an ancient style of monument that is sometimes erected as a memorial of some eminent Buddhist priest whose lifelong work has resulted in good to his sect, to his nation, and to his kind. The clouds and the shower of petals of the lotus flower are the added touches of the Christian Japanese artist who made the drawing. His name is Matsumoto. The erection of such a monument is expected to bring untold benefits to the donors of the

needful funds and to their immediate relatives. Some of those benefits are long life, freedom from illness and other physical calamities, and great comfort of soul.

There may have been a time — in fact, there must have been one — when Buddhism was an intellectual and even a spiritual power; but that day has long since gone by. The original intellectuality and spirituality of the religion have long since degenerated into ignorant superstition and sordid hope of material and present gain. When the gain hoped for is that of the future life, the superstition and the hope seem to be equally ignorant and sordid.

The characters on the monument are the written form of the celebrated prayer that is ceaselessly offered by millions in Japan — *Namu! Amida Butsu* (Hail! Amida Buddha). Its unfailing use is supposed to bring infinite benefits to the worshiper; hence a rosary is used in order to keep a record of the vain repetitions.

The strange-looking character over the top of the monument is called in Japanese the *Man-ji*. It is supposed to represent a vast accumulation of lucky signs or merits of departed Buddhist saints. Its use is expected to bring in some magical way varied and longed-for riches and blessings. It is to be seen on many sacred objects — as on the projecting beam ends of temples, on receptacles for sacred articles, and the like. Christian scholars speak of the symbol as being one form of the Greek cross; as a symbol that was used by early races of Aryan descent to represent the sun. In Japan, however, its use is distinctively Buddhistic.

J. L. A.

KOBÉ, JAPAN.





# PRINCE SIDDARTHA

## THE JAPANESE BUDDHA

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### CHAPTER I.

#### KING JOBON, PRINCE SIDDARTHA'S FATHER.

THE father of Buddha was the thirty-seventh of his line to reign over a people in Central India. His name was Jobon. His father, after a peaceful and prosperous reign of fifty years, ceded the throne and the seven caskets of royal treasures to this son.

The first of those caskets contained the genealogy of the royal line and the symbol of its authority, a magnificent gem. The second casket contained the all-powerful bow and arrow which even demons fear. The third casket contained the sword of the white lotus which gave to its possessor the power of losing all fear of demons. The fourth casket contained a gem which had the power of shining in the dark, and of making the darkest path light as day. The fifth casket con-

tained the jeweled crown. The sixth casket contained the gem-covered banner which had the power of dividing the forces and of destroying the courage of fully panoplied demons. The seventh casket contained maps of the thirty-five provinces over which King Jobon was to rule. These maps showed in detail the rivers, mountains, seas, and plains, and the paths through and over them all.

King Jobon, on receiving these symbols of royal authority and power, at once began his reign. On ascending the throne he delivered an address to his ministers and courtiers which gratified them exceedingly; and his subjects generally were none the less pleased with it when it was reported to them. King Jobon said, as a recent President of the United States said on his induction to office, that "A public office is a public trust;" hence he should study to rule justly and without partiality, and in the interests of his people rather than in his own interests.

King Jobon next ordered the erection of four new palaces for his use during the four different seasons of the year. This act was not one of extravagance, but the observance rather of an ancient custom of the realm. For a new king to

reside in palaces erected and used by his royal father was regarded as unfilial in the extreme. A beautiful site at some distance from the highway where the people were constantly coming and going was selected, and the palaces quickly built. The doors, walls, and ceilings of the palaces were adorned with agates, rubies, pearls, crystals, and other precious stones; and curtains of the richest colors and rarest workmanship were hung here and there as there was need. No such beautiful palaces had ever before been seen in that or in any other land. The king resided in each of the four according to the season of the year. When the spring flowers bloomed and sent forth their fragrance, he resided in one. In summer, when the voice of the cicada made such heavenly music that the sweet flag constantly bowed its head in approval, he resided in another. In the autumn when the reddening leaves of the maple mingled with the rich colors of the wild flowers, and the wind blew with a fragrant sigh over all, making a symphony of color and of sound both sweet and sad, he lived in another. When the winter winds blew hoarse and loud and the snow fell thick and fast, covering the earth as with a shroud, he dwelt in another. Having experienced the pleasures of

a residence in each of them, the king expressed himself as charmed and fully satisfied. The changing seasons had also taught him their lesson, and impressed upon him the importance of administering the affairs of the nation wisely, justly, and in fitting order.

About this time one of the ministers of state appeared before the king as he sat on his throne, and, prostrating himself, ventured to say: "There is one thing of great importance concerning which I desire to speak to your majesty. Your august reign has brought prosperity and joy to all your subjects. The land may even be spoken of as being the equal of, if not even superior to, the Elysium above. Your loyal subjects all fear that your illustrious and beneficent reign may be all too short, and your royal line cease to exist when you die. As your majesty well knows, the heaven above has the earth beneath with which to mate; day has its night; spring has its summer, and autumn has its winter. In spring and summer the flowers bloom and the trees grow and bear fruit. All these things are ordained by and are well pleasing to the gods. While meditating on these things it occurs to your humble servant to suggest that it does not seem fitting that

your majesty should live longer without a royal consort."

Another minister of state, also prostrating himself, gave expression to the same suggestion. The courtiers who were in the royal presence united in prostrating themselves and in confirming the suggestions of the two wise and venerable ministers.

The king, seeing the earnestness of those before him, and realizing the importance of the matter, told his ministers to provide a suitable consort for him.

The ministers and courtiers were so rejoiced at the king's reply that they arranged for a feast, and for a consultation among themselves the evening of the same day. The result of the consultation was that all the courtiers who had beautiful daughters should bring them to the palace, that the king might choose for himself the most beautiful one. After a few days three hundred young ladies were ready for presentation.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE TWO SISTERS.

SOME one reported to the king that the governor-general of a distant province of the realm had two exceedingly beautiful daughters — more beautiful than any of the three hundred he had already seen. The names of the two were Maya and Kyodomi. The king at once dispatched a messenger to the distant governor to request him to send his two daughters to the court.

The governor, while appreciating the high honor placed on him by the royal command, expressed the fear that his daughters, having been brought up in such a rural and lowly condition and in the midst of such humble surroundings, might not please the king; yet as a loyal subject he hastened to forward the young ladies to the distant palace. The elder daughter, Kyodomi, he placed under the special care of General Ba, while Maya, the younger, he entrusted to General U. Full preparations for the long journey having been made, the governor instructed his daughters

as to the serious and important nature of their errand, and then dismissed them with a large retinue of officials and of servants of both sexes.

The king, on being notified of the arrival of the two sisters, expressed his great pleasure at the ready obedience of the governor-general, and then set the day for the formal presentation of the ladies to the throne.

The sisters were so exceedingly beautiful that even the silver moon was jealous of them. When arrayed in their presentation robes they looked more like beings from heaven than like mortal maids. The two were equally beautiful, and the king could not choose between them, so he decided to retain them both. A separate palace was allotted to each sister. To Kyodomi the moon-viewing one was given, because her beauty could be compared only to the silver moon as it floats in the sky surrounded by the loveliest of white and shimmering clouds. To Maya the spring-flower-viewing one was given, because her beauty could be compared only to the loveliest blossoms of spring. On the father of the sisters, additional rank and other high honors were richly showered.

In this transitory world, however, but little continues as we desire that it should do. Clouds

come forth from distant space and hide the moon ; while fierce winds spring up and ruthlessly tear and scatter the loveliest of flowers. The sisters became jealous of each other, and a coolness and estrangement grew up between them. Kyodomi complained bitterly because her father had allowed them both to become consorts of the king ; yet as she was proud of being a queen she did not request the king to send her back to her home. She only said in her anger and discontent that she would never again think of either her father or her mother.

Maya, on the other hand, complained of the coolness of Kyodomi towards her. She poured out her grievances to her chief chamberlain and his wife. She said that when they were in their own home she and Kyodomi always slept on the same bed, folded in each other's arms ; and that they were as flowers and butterflies to each other. She said that this growing estrangement was a grievous burden that she could hardly bear ; that all attempts at communication with Kyodomi were frustrated, and that, although she wrote letters to her distant home even, no replies ever reached her.

The chamberlain and his wife comforted the

grieved heart; recommended patience and the exclusion of such thoughts from her mind.

Notwithstanding the trouble between the sisters Maya continued to serve the king faithfully and well because of his manifest love and great kindness towards her.

One warm spring day Maya fell asleep in one of the rooms of her palace that was richly ornamented with tapestry and precious stones, and dreamed. She heard the most entrancing music up in the sky. Looking upwards she saw a tower shining with a golden luster and brilliant with dazzling gems standing out from among clouds of royal hue, surrounded by eight golden banners and eight trees bearing rich and incomparable treasures of fruit and of flowers. While she was looking enchantedly on this strange vision many Buddhas came out from the opening flowers on the eight trees, and facing the tower with profound obeisance and folded hands they worshiped towards the tower, saying, "We worship and adore the Buddha who is supreme in all the universe. Matchless knowledge! Exhaustless brightness! Satisfier of the desires of all creatures! Perfecter of the three existences — past, present, and future!"

The four doors of the tower now flew open of their own accord and Maya saw the great Buddha seated as on the sun and shining in resplendent glory. He opened his mouth and said to her: "I attained to a clear perception of all truth myriads of ages ago. All creatures are equal each to the other, and all are mine. The desire that is in thy heart shall be satisfied."

A white elephant bearing a white lotus flower on its back now came forth and stopped before the Buddha, who at once took his seat in the midst of the flower. The bright light that shone about him shot out rays that reached even to the head of Maya.

The Buddha, again addressing Maya, informed her that, as he must once more be born as a human being, it was his wish that it be through King Jobon as his father and herself as his mother. Maya replied that she was not worthy of such honor, and declined to entertain the exalted proposal. Buddha replied by informing her that this was not her first acquaintance with him.

"A certain king," he said, "had a daughter named Ruri. While yet a child her mother died and she was brought up by a stepmother who

had a daughter named Kōya. Ruri was by far the more beautiful of the two. The king of another country, hearing of the beauty of Ruri, desired to have her for his queen; but the step-mother, desiring the honor for her own child, so slandered Ruri to her father that he banished her from his home and compelled her to live in a miserable hut on a distant mountain.

“Ruri took with her to this hut a copy of a sacred book which her mother had given her just before her death, and copied it out a thousand times with her own hands. She also recited aloud ten thousand volumes of the sacred works. She also gathered together seven kinds of fruits, laid them on an altar she had erected, and then worshiped *Jitsu-getsu Kōmyō Buddha*.

“For these meritorious deeds Ruri is now reborn into this world as Maya — yourself; while I am the Buddha you at that time worshiped. You are therefore a fitting person through whom I must again be born into human form. Your purity is absolute; it would neither discolor, confuse, nor defile the light of either the sun or the moon.”

Maya continued diffident, self-depreciating, and self-excusing. Strange to say, while she was

meditating on the words of the Buddha twenty-eight lotus flowers bloomed out on her hands.

Buddha, again addressing Maya, said: "Perceiving the truth, I have appeared in the world prior to this eight thousand times; and even as I have appeared I have preached in order to deliver all living things. The time has now come for me to attain to perfect knowledge and complete Buddhahood!"

Having said this he immediately became enshrined in the person of Maya. Utterly astonished at this, Maya regarded her own form with wonder, and saw to her amazement that it shone like a white gem on a golden salver and that it sent forth resplendent rays of a shining light. She also came into possession of six supernatural powers, and had a clear vision of the whole of the three thousand worlds. Many Buddhas, semi-Buddhas, and other exalted beings now came down from the heavens and worshiped her, saying, "May all saints protect the mother of the great Buddha and keep her safe from all harm!" Queen Maya was greatly moved at all this; but she awoke and found it to be only a dream.

Maya, on awaking from her sleep, revolved in her mind the unrealness and unsatisfactoriness of



dreams ; yet as the sun was shining brightly into her room, showing the loveliness of all her surroundings, she was charmed and grateful and resolved to do more for the king's pleasure than she yet had done.

A few days after the dream she felt strangely unwell and was unable to attend a flower entertainment given by the king for her pleasure. This so distressed him that he called her chief chamberlain before him and asked if homesickness were the real malady from which she suffered. After expatiating a while on the beauty and goodness of Maya, he said that he never wearied of her presence with him, and would not even though she were with him all the time.

The chamberlain reported all this to his royal mistress, whereon she cheered up surprisingly and resolved to give a sumptuous entertainment to the members of the court.

During the entertainment a lady named Kogo came dancing before the queen and congratulated her on her health and improved appearance. The bright color of her cheeks, the luminous shining of her eyes, and her noble bearing were brilliantly alluded to, and the address was closed with the statement that at no distant day the king and

court would be made glad by the birth of an heir to the throne. The lady then, singing and dancing, cried out: "Rejoice, rejoice! Congratulate the queen! Congratulate the queen!"

When the matter was reported to the king he was greatly pleased and gave strict orders that his royal consort should have the greatest care and the best of attention from the chief chamberlain and his wife and from all the members of the court.

The elder sister, Kyodomi, hearing the report, was much disturbed, and called General Ba into her presence for a consultation. She said to him: "I hear that at no distant day a child will be born to my sister—an heir to the throne. Because of this the king will be even more greatly in love with her than he is now, and will make her the real queen and give her full queenly power. I am the most miserable of women. I am utterly disgraced before the king, the court, and the people. I will kill myself this very night in order to avoid public shame. After death I will become a spirit and avenge myself by killing both Maya and her child. This is my immovable resolution."

General Ba replied to this outburst by saying,

“I sincerely sympathize with you in your disappointment and anger; but I do not see that killing yourself will in any way help matters. Trust the entire business to me.”

Kyodomi expressed herself as perfectly willing to leave the avenging of her hate to the general.

Now General Ba was noted for his unscrupulous wickedness. He advised Kyodomi to hire two ascetic monks who had the power of arresting even the winds and the waves in their flight by the energy of their prayers and incantations.

Messengers were at once sent to the distant mountain where the two men had their home to bring them to the palace. On their arrival General Ba stated the reason for their call, and told them to use their power to its utmost limits in bringing down curses and disaster on Maya and on the prospective heir to the throne. The ascetics consented, but said that it would be necessary for them to see Maya in order that they might make an image in her likeness. They affirmed that they could not otherwise effectually pray and work their incantations.

Kyodomi, who had been hiding behind a screen, rejoiced at their ready acceptance of the request and at once sat down and wrote a letter to her

sister asking her if she would not be kind enough to favor her with a call and a sisterly chat.

Maya was delighted with the kind sisterly letter, and said to those about her that the love of sisters is not evanescent and transitory as the blossoming of earthly flowers that bloom and give out their fragrance but for a short time and then fade and pass away forever; but that it is, on the contrary, like the immortal flowers that bloom and give out their perfume perennially.

Permission for the visit having been given by the king, Maya called for her carriage and escort and set out joyfully for Kyodomi's palace. Arriving at her destination the elder sister saluted the younger with the greatest warmth and cordiality, and heartily congratulated her on the promise of the future. When preparing for her return Kyodomi said to Maya: "It has been a joy of joys to meet you to-day. It seems as though I cannot contain myself because of my delight, yet as the day is waning and the king may be impatient we must now bid each other good-by."

Maya returned regretfully to her home, feeling as though she had been living through a bright and delightful dream.

While the two sisters were engaged in conver-

sation the two ascetics from their hiding place took careful note of the height, size, features, and form of Maya. Then they took rice and water, which they ground into a pulp, and out of this they made a head and face like hers. They next took straw and made a body. The head and the body they fastened together with sticks of five different forms, and then draped the whole with silk of five different colors. They also affixed a wig to the head by means of a three-feathered arrow. Having made the image they dug a pit to a depth of seven feet and there buried it. They next built an altar on which they offered a lump of black rice, into which they had driven a hundred and eighty nails, and flowers of the japonica. The water in the laver was distilled from a white serpent. The oil used in the altar lamps was expressed from lizards. The incense was made from the bones of a wolf and a tiger. They next took a yellow robe of silk, the sleeves of which were inserted upside down, a hempen girdle to tie it together with, and straw sandals with rough, unfinished soles, and placed them beside the grave of the image of Maya.

Having arranged all the details to their satisfaction, the two ascetics faced the altar and prayed

long and earnestly. After a time some of the symbolic wands which they had set about the altar becoming violently agitated, one of the men arrested his prayer and cried out: "How is it with the cursed one now? Come out here and show yourself!"

Strange to say the image rose up out of the grave, dressed itself in the yellow robe with the sleeves upside down, tied it together with the hempen girdle, stooped down and pulled on the straw sandals, and then, covering its face with the long hair of the wig, it ascended the altar and said in an audible voice: "I beg your pardon!"

Kyodomi at once came out from behind the screen where she had been in hiding, and addressing the figure on the altar said: "Do not hate me, I entreat of you. Hate our father, the King Zenhaku. My desire is now accomplished. Henceforth I have neither father nor sister."

The ascetics now approaching the altar took down the figure of Maya, wrapped it in a piece of matting, and took it away.

Kyodomi was delighted with her success in cursing her sister, and calling for General Ba instructed him to give to the two ascetics a thousand ounces of gold and a thousand rolls of silk.

The men came forward to receive the gift, but they suddenly became as wooden men.

Kyodomi, thinking them to be excessively weary because of their work, prayers, and incantations, ordered General Ba to assist them forward. The general approached to do so, when the ground suddenly rent asunder and swallowed them up.

General Ba and the others who were associated with him in the business of calling down curses on the king's child and its mother were sorely afraid at this portentous turn of affairs.



## CHAPTER III.

### MAYA, PRINCE SIDDARTHA'S MOTHER.

AFTER the visit to Kyodomi, Maya felt cheerful and happy and the days flew swiftly by. But after a time she suffered from great drowsiness, heavy sleep, and miserable dreams. She became subject to shiverings and fears and fainting fits. The chief chamberlain and his wife were sorely distressed at this unhappy change in the beautiful young queen, as also were the king and all the members of the royal court. The most celebrated physicians were called in to consult on the case. They pronounced the symptoms to be only those that are natural and incident to the condition of one who would soon become a mother. At this the king was rejoiced and gave orders that the best of care be given to the fair patient.

Maya was greatly relieved and comforted by the statements of the doctors, and time again passed lightly and pleasantly away. Month followed month and a new year with its spring came and passed away, yet no heir was born to the

throne. Maya, through disappointment and sorrow, wished that she might die.

Again Maya slept and had a dream. The Buddha, whom in a previous dream she had seen suddenly enshrined in her own person, now appeared to her objectively in the form of a child having the thirty-two marks of Buddhahood, and addressed her thus :—

“Your disappointment and bitter regret are not unreasonable, yet you must not think of them as being the work of demons. When I last conversed with you I could not give you full and satisfactory information ; but as this ignorance is likely to break your heart I will now more fully inform you, for it would not be fitting that a being who has received perfect enlightenment, in order that he may deliver all creatures, should break his mother's heart.

“The things that I speak to you I wish you to bear in your memory forever. There are three unspeakably great joys. The first of them is that one be born a man. The second one is that a man is capable of reasoning and of understanding reasons. The third is that a man may attain to perfect enlightenment and be fully cognizant of all the laws of cause and effect, of retribution and

reward of merit. There are also ten rules to be diligently observed : —

1. “Do not despise the ignoble, ourselves being noble.

2. “Do not despise the ignorant, ourselves being learned.

3. “Do not despise and reject even the superlatively ignorant, ourselves being wise.

4. “Do no harm even to the wicked by the exercise of our own good deeds.

5. “Do not despise and reject the poor, ourselves being rich.

6. “Do not despise and abandon that which is failing and deteriorating, ourselves being prosperous and flourishing.

7. “Do not despise the unfitting, the unadaptable, ourselves being both fitting and adapted.

8. “Do not despise and reject even that which is false, because we ourselves perceive and possess the truth.

9. “Do not reject the imperfect, ourselves being perfect.

10. “Do not entertain ill-will toward others because we understand the laws of rewards and punishments.

“Take heed ! take heed to these instructions !”

Continuing his address, Buddha said: "The cause of your sister's hatred was jealousy and anger. Her anger took on the form of a serpent a hundred and sixty feet long which filled the air and darkened the sun and moon with its demoniac power.

"Remember your visit to her. It was then that she cursed both you and me by the ascetics. Because of this I am bound to the joints of your person by the large cord of three hundred and sixty and more relationships. Through the cursing of the ascetics the gates of life are closed to me, and I am not now able to be born into the human life again. However, Kyodomi has broken her sisterly relation with you; besides this I have wonderful power, hence my mother who is to be and myself are secure from permanent harm.

"The ascetics who cursed us are to be pitied, for they at once fell into hell. In due time I hope to recover them and guide them into the true path. Do not, therefore, entertain ill-will against them. The mysterious power of speedy rebirth rests with me, but should I exercise that power you would be too highly praised as queen-mother, and Kyodomi's jealousy and anger would be intensified. Her evil mind would wander on from

one depth of darkness to another, and the demons of evil would never cease to torment you. Since I desire to deliver all creatures, including the ascetics who cursed us, it is not well that I should too speedily be born into the world.

“ You know that the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening. The four seasons never reach to their perfection at a bound ; nor does the fire at once attain to its fullness of flame and heat ; yet none of these things continues for any long period of time. Thus it is with the life of man. Learn therefore the transitoriness of life. Your life at court even will pass away like a blossom of spring. The pleasure of court life will pass away like the dream of a summer’s night—as the music heard during the transient vision of a moonlit evening. In a moment we become dust of the earth. Why, then, should we distress ourselves by cherishing ill-will to those who are angry and jealous with us ? Become perfectly enlightened and exercise your patience in this trying matter of the delay of my rebirth into the world. This interview with you is a real one. Never think of its being but a dream.”

Buddha again became enshrined in her person

and a clear and radiant light shone forth from his resting place.

Maya awoke from her sleep and discovered that all that had transpired was but a dream. She wondered within herself whether Buddha had indeed appeared to her objectively and really instructed and comforted her. She regretted to find herself awake. She decided to write out the substance of the two dreams before they lost their vividness.

Winter again came on the land, and with it a full twenty-two months since the Buddha first appeared to her and became enshrined within her person.

The king was sorely distressed over the strange condition of Maya. He called her chief chamberlain and his wife before him and inquired strictly into her condition both mental and physical. Maya's affirmation that a child would soon be born to inherit the throne, the confirmation of this statement by the court physicians, and hence the long delay of the event puzzled the king. He expressed his fears that the trouble had its cause in cursings; but could not understand why that should be so, inasmuch as both he and Maya were so uniformly kind to all about them. Every one

about the court was full of sorrow, and Kyodomi's kind letter showed that she also was sincerely glad that an heir to the throne was expected. From whence then could come the cursings?

The court physicians were instructed to prescribe for Maya, and they did so, but she refused to take their medicines even though she were killed for disobedience. Udai, the chief chamberlain, remonstrated with her, but she was immovable. She consented, however, to give to him her reasons for refusing to use the remedies prescribed, provided that he would keep them absolutely secret.

The promise having been given, she narrated her dreams and her belief that the one who would ultimately be born was one having mysterious power. She affirmed that she would be glad to die if the king's child could forthwith appear in the world.

Udai expressed his conviction that her words were true and reasonable, and went to report to the king. He kept his promise of secrecy, only telling the king how grateful Maya was for his love and sympathy, which were higher than the highest mountains and deeper than the deepest seas. He advised that, although he and his wife



were anxious about her, she be left alone and not forced into taking the medicine of the doctors.

To this the king consented.

Three springs passed away and another February came, yet Maya's strange condition continued unchanged. The king called together a hundred wise men from all parts of the royal domain and asked them to find out by divination whether Maya were really ill of some strange disease, or whether she were in the condition she declared herself to be. Ninety-nine of the hundred, after a period of divination, united in declaring that the queen was ill of a malady caused by cursings. The hundredth man said nothing but remained on his seat weeping.

The king caused inquiries to be made as to why he kept silence and continued weeping.

The old man replied, saying, "We have a law according to which the decision of the majority of the wise men must be accepted as the correct statement of any matter. Ninety-nine of our one hundred have thus agreed as to the malady that distresses our queen. I am old and useless, and have never attempted divinations on deep and serious matters. I trust therefore that the king will pardon my silence."

Being pressed to express his mind, notwithstanding the decision of the ninety-nine, he said: "According to my divination it is with the queen as she says."

"Why, then, are you weeping?" he was asked. "If an heir is to be born to the king, you ought to rejoice and be glad."

The old man replied: "The child which will be born of our queen will never receive bodily harm from any source, no, not even though his natal couch be made of sharp-pointed swords. He will not desire to sit on his father's throne. He will have boundless compassion and will sit on the throne of mysterious enlightenment and absolute calm. He will become Nyorai — highest Buddha — and will satisfy his long-entertained desire to deliver all the creatures of the five hundred great worlds, the three thousand smaller ones, and the numberless little ones that are scattered like millet seeds throughout space. The reason I weep is that, being now an exceedingly old man, I shall not live to see this exalted being."

The courtiers thanked him for the free expression of his thoughts, but they regarded both him and his sayings as exceedingly foolish.

The king continued to be perplexed. He did

not know which to believe, the ninety-nine or the one — Queen Maya or the doctors.

February and March having passed away the festival of the change to spring garments was celebrated and the king transferred his residence from the winter to the spring palace. The chief chamberlain induced Maya to change her quarters also.

In the early evening she fell into a deep sleep, and without the use of a pillow. A beautiful child, with a face shining like a gem and with lustrous hair, came out from the left side of the folds of her dress, and seating itself on her lap stroked her hair and said three times, "How good! How excellent!" The child then addressed her as mother and told her that for the next seven days she must take especial care of her health.

He then addressed her on the Kindness of Parents to their Children, and said that it was deeper than the summer, and that children who did not recognize the five kindnesses of their father and the ten of their mother were ignorant and brutish indeed. The favors of the mother, he said, are prenatal, natal, and postnatal, and include all the anxieties and sufferings of mind and

of body during those periods. The wonderful child entered into a detailed statement of each of these, and closed its long address by asking, "How can a child ever repay these great kindnesses of the mother? A man's life in this world is but fifty years ; it is but a dream. True pleasure consists in absolute quietness and holiness, and in these only consists the reality of realities. I am glad to call King Jobon my father and you my mother." Saying this he warmly embraced her.

Maya immediately arose to call Udai, the chief chamberlain, but she awoke, and, alas ! it was only a dream.

As spring came on the king thought of giving the flower entertainment that for two or three years had been postponed on account of Maya's strange indisposition, and sent a message to her to ask her if she could be present. If she could not be present, he said that he would postpone its observance yet another year.

Maya was very grateful for the invitation, and for the form in which it was sent by the lips of a court lady, and replied that as she had not seen the king for so long the seeing him at the entertainment would do her the good of a prayer.

Great preparations were made for the event, and the courtiers, both ladies and gentlemen, arrayed themselves in their costliest and most brilliant attire. Kyodomi also was invited and was present.

The guests having arrived, and having been seated according to the king's command, Maya was sent for that she might act the part of hostess on the occasion.

She hastened to obey the summons, and at once set out from the palace to the audience hall accompanied by a large suite of courtiers — both ladies and gentlemen. Maya was beautiful beyond the power of description. Her head was adorned with a crown of precious stones, her hair ornament was composed of eight flower clusters, consisting of eight colors, which were skillfully disposed about the crown. Round her neck she wore a bracelet of emeralds, amber, agates, crystals, pearls, and gold. For a dress she wore a priestly garment of rich scarlet brocade, and over that she wore a gauze mantle made of golden thread. Her eyebrows shone from the whiteness of her face like new moons in the sky. The light of love shone forth from her eyes, and her rosy lips looked ripe for its expression. In a word,

Queen Maya as she came before the assembled guests, surrounded by her richly appareled suite, looked as does the full moon when, surrounded by clouds of the loveliest hue and form, it shines out in all its perfection of beauty in the sky.

A mysterious light from the perfected beings also shone on the head of Maya, which protected and sustained her so that new vigor entered her frame and she walked royally forward and took her appointed seat.

The king, seeing her look so strangely beautiful, said: "Can this be indeed the Maya whom I have not seen for three long years? This beauty is of the heavens, heavenly, and not of the earth at all."

Kyodomi also was greatly surprised at the improved loveliness of her sister, and frankly congratulated her. Her mental attitude toward Maya also changed, and this was the result of a mysterious power exercised over her by the Buddha who had been enshrined in the person of Maya for the past three years. The Buddha thus enshrined, now seeing the three thousand worlds that compose the universe pass before him, decided that the auspicious time for satisfying the desires of all creatures was now close at hand.

The mysterious influence that the Buddha exercised on the mind of Kyodomi now induced within her a spirit of repentance and so strong a desire to confess the grievous wrong she had done her sister that she broke out into weeping.

The king and his courtiers thought her crying and tears to be those of joy over the restoration to health of Maya and of her wondrously enhanced beauty, and were deeply impressed with the sense of her tender, sisterly love.

The king now addressing the courtiers said: "As you well know, the plucking of flowers from the hōju tree is strictly prohibited, yet to-day I give you all permission to pluck a blossom for a hairpin. If also any wish to pluck a flower and present it to Queen Maya, they may do so."

All present availed themselves of the royal permission, and each person selected a cluster of flowers that was worthy of the queen and in turn offered it to her. This is the origin of the custom which obtains even to the present day of making offerings of flowers on the altar before Buddha's image in order to gain his favor and his love.

The king now asked Maya if she would not pluck a blossom from the daibara tree, the very finest in the royal garden, and present it to him.



She at once stepped down from her seat to do so. She lifted her left hand to pluck a flower, but instantly collapsed and fell down in a fainting fit. The court ladies hurried to her assistance and she shortly came to consciousness; with consciousness came the conviction that the time for the fulfillment of her dreams was close at hand.

The enshrined Buddha, speaking as with an audible voice to the consciousness of Maya, addressed her as mother and informed her that where no idea is present to the mind there is no bewilderment, no enlightenment, no love, no jealousy, no emotion of any kind. This state, he said, constitutes the devotional mind — *Bodai-shin*. The outcome of this is that life and death are but as the same thing to us and that this is Nirvana.

When the Buddha had finished his speech two golden banners fell from the sky and lighted on the top of the daibara tree from which Maya would have plucked the blossom and at the foot of which she was resting. The Buddha was now born from her left side. At the moment of his birth the two banners changed into golden dragons having the light and beauty of the eight mysterious colors. Having washed the person of

the babe and its mother with the water of accumulated merits, the dragons ascended to the heavens and were lost to sight.

The newborn Buddha now rose to his feet, and, taking three steps forward and four steps backward, pointed with a finger of his left hand to heaven and to the earth with a finger of his right hand and said: "In heaven and on earth I am alone." This means that he was the highest and most exalted personage of the heaven above and the earth beneath. He then took a seat on the lap of his mother and after warmly embracing her, partook of the nourishment which her bosom had already amply provided for him. His repast finished, the chief chamberlain and his wife took the marvelous babe in charge.

Maya now closed her eyes as in sleep and so passed away from mortal being.

The king and all his train were profoundly impressed with these strange events and united in sorely lamenting the sudden yet illustrious death of Maya, the mother of the royal heir. The flower entertainment they now regarded as but a beautiful and fitting farewell given to the lovely dead.

Kyodomi bitterly regretted her unsisterly con-

duct and affirmed that although the sun and the moon might be blotted out of existence, yet her grievous sins could never be blotted out. She cried out, "O heaven! help me and take my life with that of my sister."

The king, on returning to his own apartments, called Maya's chief chamberlain before him and said: "We cannot help the death of Queen Maya. I know that the flowers we most love are soonest scattered and gone, yet I cannot but weep for my queen." He then questioned Udai very closely concerning the queen's personal matters during the three years preceding the birth of the child — years during which he had not met her at all.

Udai gave as full a report as his knowledge allowed and informed the king that Maya had herself written everything in a book about her dreams, her visions of Buddha, and his addresses to her.

The king directed Udai to bring Queen Maya's journal and read it to him. Among other things the queen had written down was the statement that if she died childless, she had a strong desire that a post-mortem examination be made and the cause of her malady disclosed. The king was affected to weeping by this, for he then realized

how deep had been the mental sorrow and heart trouble of Maya during those three long years.

He then gave orders that Maya be regarded as a living queen and not as a dead woman. He ordered the erection of a magnificent sepulcher at the foot of a celebrated mountain, the erection of a pagoda monument one hundred and sixty feet high, and of a palace like the one in which she had lived since she came to be his queen.

He also ordered the laying out of a beautiful garden and the transfer to it of the hōju or treasure trees from his own choice collection. He commanded the transplantation, immediately in front of the pagoda monument, of the daibara tree from which Mayā would have plucked a flower to present to the king and at the base of which she rested when the heir to the throne was born.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE YOUNG PRINCE.

THE usual hundred days of mourning having passed away, the king commanded his ministers to learn when the nearest auspicious day would occur. This having been discovered and announced, the king issued a proclamation to the courtiers and nobles of his realm commanding their attendance at the palace at that time. The time and guests having arrived, the king ordered Queen Maya's chief chamberlain and his wife to bring her child, the young prince, into the royal presence. The command having been obeyed, the king took the child on his knee.

The young prince was strangely beautiful. His face was as lovely and as smiling as a gem, and his hair lustrous and shining as gems combed into tresses. His eyebrows were as new moons, and his lips expressed deep compassion. His every form and feature were more lovely than any artist could depict.

The king embracing him turned to his court and said: "Where is Kyodomi?"

Kyodomi responding to the call, the king said: "Receive this child, who is to be the source of thousands on thousands of years of reign and blessing, and attend to and train him as your own." The king also commanded that the young prince be always spoken of as the son of Kyodomi and that Maya's name be not even mentioned within the precincts of the palace.

The young prince celebrated the ceremony of tying up the hair for the first time when he was three years of age. At that time he made his first formal visit to his father's palace accompanied by a magnificent retinue of courtiers. He took with him as a present to the king a beautiful horse, rich damasks, swords ornamented with silver and gold, gem-covered banners, and other rich gifts.

Although he was spoken of as being but three years of age, he was really five; hence he was tall and wise and dignified in his deportment. He carefully observed the ceremony of the occasion and behaved with the greatest circumspection.

The king was deeply impressed with his manners and bearing, and gave to him the name of Siddartha.

The king called Udai, Maya's chief chamberlain,

before him and said: "The day for celebrating the custom of the tying up of the hair for the first time, and the giving of a name being an important one, conduct the prince to the sepulcher where Queen Maya was entombed. Kyodomi may accompany him if she desires to do so."

Kyodomi was glad of the royal permission, for she thought that Maya would be glad of such a visit from her. She thought also that it would be an opportune occasion to confess the sins she had committed against her sister. The hōju or treasure trees transplanted beside the pagoda-monument were in full bloom when the party reached the spot.

Kyodomi made full confession before the sepulcher and said: "Although the flowers have no minds with which to think, yet they do not forget to remind me of my sister and of my sins. These flowers continue to bloom year after year, but my sister never returns. I deeply regret the wrong I did her and repent of it ever as these flowers newly bloom."

The prince, having nothing on his mind, passed away the time by playing under the daibara tree. The rain began to fall, but he continued his play regardless of the shower.



Udai took him up in his arms to carry him to a place of shelter, but the prince angrily threw himself from the old retainer's embrace. Udai then rebuked him for his obstinacy, and said that it was because of three years of such prenatal obstinacy that his mother had died. Kyodomi also rebuked him for his conduct.

On this the prince said: "The mother I see here is not my mother. Where is my true mother? I wish to see her." Beating on Kyodomi's knees with his hands he said: "What is the name of this place? Who lives here? Who is the master of the house?"

It was by questions like these that the child showed the deep wisdom he possessed.

Kyodomi, deeply distressed, said: "There is no master to this house. It is the residence of Maya. Look about you and see the lovely flowers."

"Call Maya," urged the prince.

Kyodomi replied that although they might call there would be no answer. She requested the attendants to give the child the usual festival wine.

The prince now decided that he had found out who his real mother was, and that he would ultimately find out all about her.

According to one saying the visit of the prince

to the sepulcher of Maya is spoken of as "becoming a priest at the age of three." According to another saying it is spoken of as "becoming a priest at the age of five."

On the return of the party to the palace the prince tore off a branch of the daibara tree as a souvenir of the visit and resolutely held and carried it in his own hand.

The fifth birthday of Prince Siddartha having arrived, the festival of crowning the heir apparent to the throne with the usual coronet was celebrated. On this occasion King Jobon openly called on Kyodomi to assume the position of mother of the prince. The king, on placing the coronet on the youthful head, said that it was his desire that, by the favor of the king of heaven, the descendants of his family might continue for endless ages to govern the realm and cause it to prosper in all good things.

Kyodomi then came forward and, congratulating the prince on the occasion, said that it was her desire that his power might extend over all the countries under the heavens; that he might govern wisely and well; that his people might be contented and prosperous, and that his life might be everlasting. She then presented him with the

bifurcated skirt or skirt-like trowsers, which with the coronet constituted the ceremonial and court dress of the heir apparent to the throne.

The courtiers and nobles who were present at the ceremony were deeply impressed with the prince's beauty and his resemblance to his mother, Maya. They said to each other that if she were yet living in this transient world she would be proud of her boy on this occasion. Some of them secretly shed tears, and all became hushed and still.

The prince knew their thoughts and regretted within himself that he had been the cause of his mother's death. He said: "The height of heaven, though so very high, cannot be compared to the favors shown by a father to his child; nor can the thickness of the earth be compared to a mother's love. It was my fault that my mother died on my birth into the world. Knowing so well as I do the love of parents for their offspring, I ought not to have conducted myself as though I had no mother. I fear that I may be punished<sup>1</sup> by heaven for this offense. If one commits a sin, there is no place on earth where the sinner can

<sup>1</sup> Buddha, unlike Jesus, does not claim to be without sin. He here is allowed by the author to accuse himself of having deliberately caused his mother's death.

conceal himself. Surely there must be some way of escaping from the punishment of sin."

From this time on the prince esteemed King Jobon as his father, and rendered to him the filial service that was his due.

When the prince celebrated his seventh birthday, various manly sports of the nobles were indulged in by him and the sons of courtiers and nobles. The sports took place in the palace grounds, and the king, with his courtly train, honored the occasion with his presence.

The first game consisted in shooting at a flying ball with bow and arrow. The youth of the court were disposed in two parties — the eastern and the western — with a captain to each. Prince Siddartha was appointed captain of the eastern company.

The eastern party threw a ball up into the air and the western party shot arrows at it as it went up and as it came falling down, but failed to put one through it. Then the western party threw up a ball, but the eastern party was no more successful than the western. The captains of the two companies were then called on to decide the contest in the same way. The captain of the western party threw a ball and sent it whizzing through the air. Prince Siddartha shot

his arrow and pierced it through at once. When the prince threw up the ball the captain of the western party missed his aim; hence the victory was with the prince's party. The king, however, said that the shot was perhaps a chance, or merely a lucky one, hence the contest had better be tried over again. This was done, but the result was the same as before.

The age of the captain of the western band was fifteen, while Siddartha was but seven.

From this time the defeated youth began to hate the young prince. The prince, however, compassionating all living things and thinking it a grievous thing to wound another's heart, regretted that he had won the victory and invited Daibadatta into the palace. He also, on returning to his own apartments, told Kyodomi of his victory and of his regret at having gained it.

When the prince was nine years of age the king called his counselors together and said to them: "Life is indeed like a swiftly running steed as it flies by a given stage. I am fast growing old, and my son will soon be a man. It is time the youth began his studies. What course of study would you recommend—that of ordinary worldly wisdom, or that which is extramundane?"

The counselors after consulting together divided into two parties. The one recommended studies suitable to one whose rank in life necessitated wearing garments of brocade, while the other recommended the study of ordinary worldly knowledge — “the way of this world,” as they called it.

The king, thanking the counselors for their suggestions, said: “I remember now the divination made by the old man when the one hundred were called in to divine the cause of the queen’s indisposition. The advice that the prince be taught those things suitable to one who is to wear brocade is quite reasonable, but I think that on the whole it will be better to teach him the ordinary worldly knowledge. Utsu-ran-hotsu is a man who is wise in the way of the world; let him be the prince’s teacher.”

The prince took a pen at the request of his teacher, in order to learn the art of penmanship, but being a superhuman being he learned even the most difficult forms of writing with incredible rapidity. Music, both instrumental and vocal, he learned as though he were but reviewing lessons already thoroughly mastered. His teacher was amazed at his intelligence, and in order to test it more fully he said one day: “Out of the two

hundred volumes on those shelves bring me one volume that you would like me to teach you. Select also out of the one hundred volumes over there any single volume you would like to be instructed from."

The prince at once made a selection from the two collections. One of the books was entitled, "A Collection of Supernatural Wonders," while the other was an essay on "Conversion and the Returning of Favors."

Utsu-ran-hotsu inferred from this selection of studies that the prince would never desire to sit on the throne of his father, the king, but that he would on the contrary choose the path of the wise genii. He informed the prince that permission from the king would be necessary before he could instruct him in the studies he desired to be proficient in, and so advised his return to the palace.

While on his way to the palace accompanied by Udai and other retainers, he was met by an old man in destitute circumstances, whom the retainers at once fell upon with their staves to drive him out of the way. The prince, however, rebuked them, saying that aged people, even though rude and uncouth, should be honored as our parents. He also alighted from the vehicle in which



he was riding and apologized to the old man for the rudeness and brutality of his retainers.

The old man smiled and thanking the prince for his kindness said : " I am Prince Senjo. When I was ninety-five years old <sup>1</sup> I heard that a certain Bodhisatva <sup>2</sup> was preaching concerning ' the great wisdom ' in a mountain to the northeast of my home. I left the palace and went to hear the preacher, but he died soon after my arrival ; hence I heard only part of his instructions. I feared to lose the merit I had acquired from hearing the Bodhisatva preach, hence I dismissed my suite and for the past seventy years I have been wandering hither and thither as an ascetic, seeking to return the favor of the preacher and accumulate merit for myself. Your palace, young prince, is a large and a beautiful one, but it cannot be relied on for imparting enduring happiness, for all things are but as a dream — unreal and transient."

Having said this the old man went on his way. Prince Siddartha would have stopped him in order to invite him to the palace to give him

<sup>1</sup> This must mean that the old man was ninety-five years old when the young prince met him. The original text, however, does not read in that way.

<sup>2</sup> One who would become a full Buddha after the next incarnation and birth into this world.

instruction in the things he had learned, but Udai interfered and hastened the prince into his vehicle.

From this time the desire of the prince to receive instruction in the deep things the old man had spoken of became rooted in his mind as a mountain is rooted in the earth, but he kept his thoughts to himself. It is, however, a well-known truth that neither the sun nor the moon lose their light because clouds and fogs sometimes conceal them. Thus it was with the desires of the Prince Siddartha as they lay concealed in his heart.

Udai reported to Kyodomi all that had transpired between the prince and his teacher, and between the prince and the old man. He said that the throne had no attractions for the youth; that the outlook for the future was gloomy, and that he was so exceedingly grieved that he could not refrain from weeping.

Kyodomi expressed great impatience at the prince's folly. She said that, being as a souvenir left by Maya, and as an ornament of her own, great things for the king, for the country, and for himself were expected of him on his assumption of the royal power.

She reported the matter to the king, who said that he was not surprised; that the past had pre-

pared him for something of this sort. He also said that it was because of this that he had sent the boy to Utsu-ran-hotsu, in order that he might be taught of things that relate to this world. He advised that no attention be paid to the matter, except ordinary reproof from herself and Udai, and careful watching.

Kyodomi, on returning to her palace, called the prince before her and took him to task for desiring to pursue studies that were neither suitable for him nor acceptable to the king. She also rebuked him for listening to the conversation of a foolish old man of whom nothing was known. She next appealed to his love for herself, that he might desist from the desire to learn the teachings and the ways of the religious ascetics. She told him that the king's love for herself had greatly increased since she had given him birth; that if he should leave her to wander away to pursue those studies, she would be unable to contain herself and would be constrained to follow him even to the far-away mountains at the end of the world where wolves and tigers dwell. Concluding her appeal, Kyodomi sat down and wept bitterly.

The prince said within himself: "I feel heavy at heart. Surely this is one of the shackles of

this fleeting world. Conversion, study, ascetic discipline cannot be accomplished if one be deficient in wisdom and passion. What is the true way? I have heard that a certain prince obtained a priceless gem by baling out a deep sea with the skull of an infant. It may perhaps be so with me. My mind is immovably fixed. Though the largest mountains crumble to dust, yet my resolve will never change. What is wisdom? It is thought, consideration. It is true also that there is a wisdom that is worldly, and one that is above the world. True compassion does not consist in breaking one's own heart by obeying others. I will endeavor to comfort Kyodomi."

Having reached this conclusion the prince expressed the deepest regret that he had occasioned her so much anxiety. He explained the incident of meeting with the white-haired old man as being brought about by the harshness of his own servants. The old man was, he said, a prince who did not like some evil thing there was in his own land called *hané* or *hagé* and so had left his country and had wandered about until he was now eighty or ninety years of age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The discrepancy as to the age (p. 62) seems to be that of indifferent memory.

Having recited the whole matter the prince said: "It must have been Udai who told you of the incident. It is, however, true that I wish to know what this *hané* or *hagé* may be which is so injurious to a prince's country. I see, however, that Udai's reason for making this report to you was his desire that I might hear of nothing evil. I trust that now you will let your mind be at rest. Alas, that unlucky *hané* or *hagé*, whichever it was!"

Kyodomi was well pleased with the prince's interpretation of the incident, and regarded her anxiety as needlessly foolish. She said to herself: "Why, the child did not even understand the words used by the old man. *Hannya*, that is, wisdom, he understood as *hagé* or *hané*. If that is the extent of his ability, I may well be at rest about him. My fear is but the result of an excess of love for him."

This mental rest which she obtained was the result of the remarkable wisdom of the prince.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Compare this incident with the one of Jesus in the temple, when found by his parents and questioned by them as to his separation from them. He does not gloss over or deliberately mislead them as young Buddha is here represented as doing. He only said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PRINCE'S GLOOM AND YEARNING.

TIME now hung heavily on the prince's hands.

He thought that life was but as dew newly fallen on the grass, which would almost in a moment be dried up and gone if the wind of transientness should blow over it. He had serious thoughts of running away from the palace, but restrained himself, as he did not know where to go to find a teacher who would instruct him in the things he desired to learn. His appetite also failed.

Kyodomi again became anxious about him and increased his mental trouble by questioning him as to the reason of his gloomy and unhappy condition. She urged him to make playmates of the sons of the courtiers just as peasant boys make of the sons of fellow villagers.

The suggestion about playmates pleased the prince. He concluded that ten youths coming from as many different regions of country could give him the peculiar knowledge of each, and he

might thus find out where he could obtain the instruction he so desired.

Having made the acquaintance of some of the sons of the courtiers, he asked them what they thought about the fact that all living creatures after their kind have their own particular place of abode and make friends only of their own kind.

One youth replied: "Yes, yes; I know all about it. Dragons do not associate with creeping things, neither do lions and kirin [a fabulous beast] associate with domestic animals. None of these creatures, however, lives alone, and the reason of this is that they have no mind. Man, being a superior being, makes a friend and companion of his own mind. He also longs after and makes friends of those who are like his own mind. You remember the old saying that if a man wishes to know what his own mind is, he should see his friend."

Another youth said: "It may be that birds and beasts associate together for the reason expressed, but it is not so with man. It is not possible that any one can find a friend comparable to his own mind. Is it probable, however, that any one will make a sole friend and companion of his own mind and be content with that?"

Another youth said: "Although it may seem



reasonable enough that one should make a friend and sole companion of his own mind, yet there is no proof that any one ever did so."

Another youth said: "Every one speaks the things heard from others and I will not do the same. The number of paths or professions in this world are unlimited. Literature, medicine, vocal and instrumental music, art, government, military power, and wise counsel has each its mysteries. It is not of these paths, however, that I want to speak, but of the path by which one makes his own mind his friend and companion. There are three only that may truly be called 'paths.' One of these is the path of wisdom; the next is the path of clearness, while the third is the path of the sages—the holy path. The path of wisdom is the one that instructs as to conversion and the returning of favors; the path of clearness is the one that instructs in and clears up all mysteries; the path of the sages, or holy path, gives instruction as to generosity, benevolence, the art of governing the country in peace, with the ten excellent virtues. Those who have studied these three paths and made their own mind both friend and companion are called sages and are highly esteemed. I have heard that persons who are

proficient in the paths of wisdom and clearness live in the mountains that are distant from here full three thousand miles."

Prince Siddartha was delighted with this information, and he regarded the youth who had given it as a heavenly being. Wishing to hear yet more he said: "I think it very doubtful that any human being could exist on those distant mountains."

The youth who had given the information replied: "It is a fact that human beings live in the mountains that are one third that distance from here. From there onward there are tracks of men through the valleys and by the rivers, but no residences. Afterward the way opens and leads over many sunny peaks."

The prince was well pleased over this additional information, and felt exceedingly grateful to Kyodomi for her suggestion about making playmates of the sons of the courtiers. The conversation ended, the entire company gave themselves up to fun and frolic until the time came for them to separate and return to their respective homes.

Prince Siddartha now longed more than ever to leave the palace. The pleasure he had received from the conversation of the youth about the three paths, the distant mountains, the sages and

genii living there was to him as the steadfast shining of sun and moon that would never again become dim. He was, however, constantly surrounded by courtiers and other attendants; hence he could not leave the palace without immediate discovery. His thoughts constantly reverted to those distant mountains, and the instruction in wisdom and the clearing up of all mysteries to be obtained there; hence his face again became sad.

Maya's old chamberlain, Udai, asked the cause of his melancholy, and offered his services to procure anything that would give him pleasure and bring smiles again into his face.

The prince replied that it was not easy to be pleasant unless one had a friend after one's own mind with whom conversation on mutually congenial subjects could be carried on. Udai thought that he fully understood the state of mind the prince was in; hence in reporting the interview to Kyodomi he suggested that some beautiful princess be found for him as a cure for his melancholy.

Kyodomi repeated the suggestion to the king, who approved of it. He gave orders that search be at once made for suitably lovely young ladies or princesses, and that a new palace be erected for the prince's use after his marriage.

The palace was soon erected, fitted up and ornamented with costly material and with scenery adapted to the fullest enjoyment of the four seasons of the year.

Kyodomi selected three of the loveliest of the young ladies who had been presented as companions or brides of Prince Siddartha. Udai took charge of the new household, and when the marriage and transfer of the prince and his brides took place, the ceremonies and congratulations from all the court were too magnificent and abundant to be described in the limits of a book.

After a time Kyodomi secretly called the three princesses into her presence and said to them: "Daughters, listen well to what I say! The prince has begun to have strange thoughts. His mind is filled with the desire to learn the teachings and perform the austerities of the ascetics, and he is seeking for an opportunity to steal away from the palace. He has not the least desire to ascend the throne. It will be a great comfort to the king and to myself if you can succeed in diverting him from his present purpose and in weaning him from his desire. Never for one moment leave his side, or he will fly away and our grief become unbearable. There are three



The Three Brides.



things that all women, whether of high or of low degree, need to guard against. The first is excess of sleep and ease-taking; the second is excessive attachment to their husbands so that they become the objects of contempt and dislike to others; the third is jealousy of rivals, resulting in quarreling and cunning trickery.<sup>1</sup> All these things strain and sometimes break the relation that exists between the master and subjects, father and child, husband and wife, and bring about great misfortune. I entreat you, therefore, to serve the prince with but one mind, and win him from this idea of seeking conversion and the path of the ascetics. He is shrewd and full of wisdom, so you will need to be constantly on the alert and to watch him carefully."

Kyodomi, after making each of the princesses a present of a beautiful costume, escorted them to their own palace.

The brides made their best endeavor to divert the prince, but it was all to no purpose. His desire for conversion and the study and practice of the path of the ascetics grew stronger every day.

<sup>1</sup>The second and third points here mentioned are inevitable in a country where many wives—in this case three—have only one husband among them.



The various members of Prince Siddartha's court exhausted their eloquence in pointing out and in congratulating the prince on the beauty of his palace and its surroundings. In the spring they said, What can be more lovely than the flowers that bloom in these gardens and send out so abundantly their rich perfume? In the summer, How attractive are the willow trees full of sweet swinging birds which make melodies to charm the dullest ears! In the autumn, The landscape, how rich it is with its haze of atmosphere, its reddening leaves, its rich brocade of coloring, its clear and limpid moons! The winter, too, is equally charming, for the distant mountains are covered with snow, and the wind blows with a sweet melodious sound through the branches of the trees.

The prince heard all the eloquence of those about him with an untouched heart. The desire to satisfy his innermost longings for the study of the deepest truths and to practice the austèrities of a sacred life only grew the stronger as the praises of the things about him were sung in his ears. He looked on the loveliest and most fragrant of the flowers of spring and thought in his heart that both the flowers and their fragrance would

soon pass away as a dream. The rich foliage of the summer, too, would soon be torn from the trees and sent whirling hither and thither by the autumn winds; the luxuriant foliage and the choruses of birds would likewise pass away as in a moment, while the reddening leaves and the rich, brocade-like beauty of the autumn landscape would soon be brought to an end by the falling of winter snows.

It is thus, the prince thought, with the life of man. The time of youth passes away as a dream, and gray hairs like the snows of winter soon cover the heads of men and women alike. Birth, youth, old age, sickness, and death come on us and hasten us away as the seasons of the year bring out and then destroy the beauty of every succeeding season. Who is able to deliver us from these fleeting, transitory things? <sup>1</sup>

When the prince was seventeen years of age he thought of many plans and sought out many opportunities to escape from the palace; but he was always foiled in his attempts by the concerted care and watchfulness of his brides, his courtiers, and his servants.

<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to think of Jesus, who so evidently enjoyed associating with his fellows, and of eating and drinking with them, as having ever looked out on life with such sad eyes and with such a gloomy heart as Buddha is here represented as having.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PRINCE ESCAPES FROM THE PALACE.

THE prince, wearied of his idle, useless life, became deeply depressed by his inability to overcome the demon of this fleeting world. He concluded that he could not accomplish his desire by his own unaided power. Casting about in his mind and searching for one who might help him to escape from the palace, he decided that one of his brides, whose name was Yasodhara, and who was not only exceedingly beautiful but who was also gentle and kind, would be the one most likely to listen to his confidences and aid him in his endeavors.

He approached her by saying, "You know the old proverb which speaks of the very great intimacy of the relation of those who have met under the shadow of a certain tree and together drunk of the water of the spring at its base. Our relation is something like that." The prince went on to say that he had a matter of great importance he wanted to speak to her about, but

that she must promise to keep it an inviolable secret.

Yasodhara was much perplexed as to the answer she ought to give, for she was sure that the subject to be spoken of was the one that Kyodomi had warned herself and the other two brides about soon after their marriage with Prince Siddartha.

Her silence called out a sharp question from the prince as to whether she had heard him address her.

Thus constrained, Yasodhara replied by saying that she was sorry to have him say such things; that she had thus far served him with all her heart; that she was willing to sacrifice her life for him; and that if he commanded her to do anything for him, she would certainly not disobey him.

The prince was glad of this reply and said that he would never forget her kind words, either now in this world or in the future worlds. He then unfolded to her his plan of leaving the palace in order to carry out his desires. He asked her to see to it that the other brides and their maids retired to their own rooms that night quite early, and then to conduct him through the various halls

and apartments of the palace to the outer gate. He also promised to return to her after a time and tell her of things that he could not yet speak about.

Yasodhara wept bitterly and covered her face with the long pendent sleeve of her dress.

The prince chided her for weeping, and told her that the whole of life is but as a fleeting dream, and that even the affectionate relation he had formed with her was a shackle which hindered his escape from transient things. He told her that the present was no time for weeping; that as she had given her life to him — as she had said — now was the time for action. He then sent her away to dismiss the other brides, and all other persons about his suite of rooms, to their respective apartments for the night, and to prepare herself to escort him to the outer gate — though she thought that she was to accompany him in his flight.

Yasodhara did as she was commanded, and then returned and reported that all had retired, and that she was ready to show him the way. The prince thanked her, and then, pointing with the finger of his right hand to her bosom, said: “When you see the flowers blooming on their

stems six years from now, a son will be born to you who will comfort you in my stead, even though I am dead."

Yasodhara replied that as he knew full well the mysteries of birth into human life this was indeed a strange way to give her comfort !

The prince and the princess now moved on towards the outer gate of the palace, which having reached, the prince himself took down the bars and opened. He then turned around to Yasodhara and told her that their worldly relations were now forever ended.

These words struck her with dismay, and all she could say was that she was willing and ready to accompany him to the very end of the world.

The prince replied that he knew that separation would be painful because of the fleshly appetites and desires which filled the mind, but that as for him, this was the end of the worldly, fleshly life. He also told Yasodhara that excessive love and attachment are the doors of darkness that shut us up in this fiery world ; and that faith is the sword by which one must strike off our shackles and break through these doors and so make our way into the land of purity and tranquillity.

Prince Siddartha then went out to the royal stables, called for a fast horse and a servant to accompany him, and set out toward the southeast to find those who would teach him the things he so much desired to learn. His horse went bravely on through valley after valley and over peak after peak, while several supernatural beings, appearing in the sky, guided and cheered him with their presence and power. The joy of the prince during this journey exceeded all power of description.

Having reached a certain high peak of a mountain he looked over the broad expanse spread out before him and said to his servant: "How lovely and peaceful is all this view! The royal throne is nothing in comparison with it. All the glory of kings and of high officials is but for a moment as a dream, and vanishes away as soon as the flowers of spring fade into dust. Attachment to those things is as a fiery darkness fed with the fuel of worldly appetites and passions."

The servant, not having any understanding of the words spoken, made no reply, but he felt as though he were passing through a strange dream.

An old man with white hair, wearing a garment made of the leaves of trees and bearing a fagot of

dried sticks on his shoulder and a basket of flowers in his hand, now made his appearance.

Approaching the prince he said: "How does it happen that you come here thus luxuriously attired? This is not the place for ordinary mortals to come; it is the place for instruction in the three Buddhistic scriptures. This is a sacred place where only the three classes of priests reside who engage in the study of conversion, causes and effects, the way of salvation, and other wisdom, and who perform the various austerities appropriate to their studies. Why, then, do you come here riding on a horse and wearing such unclean garments? You must be careful not to go any farther in this condition. The one who accompanies you seems also to be an unclean person and one who has been walking on unclean ground."

Prince Siddartha thanked the old man for his admonition, and then asked him the way to the mountain that it was the object of his desire to reach.

The old man replying said that it was yet a hundred miles away; that it was the high mountain at the base of which white clouds could be seen, and on the peaks of which the golden sun-



light was shining, and that the path which led to it was firm faith. Having said this he wended his way down the valley.

The prince, advancing on the road he had been traveling, was soon met by a youth bearing a staff in his hand, who stopped abruptly and said: —

“How is this, my lord? Who are you that you come to this mountain in this guise? Have you lost your way? This mountain is sacred to the teaching of the two great principles and no ox or horse has ever been allowed to come hither. This mountain is connected on the north with the snow-bearing mountains; also on the south with the peak of mysterious sounds and utterance of secret things. There also are the three celebrated waterfalls from which flows the spiritual river. The flower of perfect enlightenment and the green lotus of metamorphosis also bloom there. Yet farther on there are the mysterious gates of the eight right paths. One of these is the Gate of Conversion; another is the Gate of Ascetic Austerities; another is the Gate of Deliverance; another is the Gate of Enlightenment; another is the Gate of Equal Enlightenment; another is the Gate of Nirvana, and another is the Gate of Absoluteness. Those who do not possess the three

minds can never hope to reach and pass through those gates. If you go forward without paying any heed to what I have now told you, your life will be in peril."

Having concluded his address the youth turned away and began to ascend the mountain the peak of which towered high above the clouds.

Prince Siddartha now instructed the servant who had accompanied him thus far to return home with the horses; but because of his anxiety for the prince's safety Shanoku refused to obey.

They wended their way together toward the peak where the youth had gone. When they had made about half the distance to the top a genius came down from the peak and in a voice that shook the mountain said:—

"All laws are absolute extinctions. The heart of faith is the superlative one. In this place all is solitary. No human voice is to be heard."

With the stout staff which he held in his hand the genius now attacked the prince, and pressing his head forcibly down he said:—

"Here we have a beast of a man, an exceedingly wicked fellow. How did you come to this place? Confess all to me at once!"

The prince replied: "I came here to satisfy my

desire by the study of the teachings about 'Conversion and the Return of Favors.' Who are you who ask?"

The genius said: "I am one who lives in a hut on this mountain. Your desire can never be satisfied or granted, and it would be better for you to at once return to the place from whence you set out. I know quite well who you are. The evil deeds one performs are huge as the earth, while the little of good that is wrought is like the bit of earth under the finger nails! How can one who has killed his mother, whose love and kindness are deeper than the deepest sea, atone for his sin by the performance of a few good deeds? Your desire to learn, though long entertained, can never be satisfied. Return to the fiery world from whence you have come and pass your life there."

The prince thought within himself that this man must certainly be the one who could teach him the things he was so desirous of learning; and that the very meeting with him in that place was a sign that his journey would not be taken in vain. He therefore said: "Then you are a genius—a holy being. I am indeed a sinner as you say. I am truly ashamed of myself. I know full well

that neither in heaven nor on earth is there any place where I can conceal my sin. Have pity on me and teach me the way of escape from my sin! Is there not some way by which one can escape from one's transgressions?"<sup>1</sup>

The genius replied: "There is an ancient word which says, 'Confess, and confession will annihilate confession; believe, and perform the merit of austerities and all will be ended.' You must first, however, be converted, as conversion is a thing of chief concern."

The prince, bowing and worshiping the genius, said that he would gladly perform the austerities for millions on millions of cycles of time—if this life were insufficient—if he would but consent to be his teacher.

The genius replied: "Well said! I have ample knowledge, but you must know that when one would study these truths and perform these austerities he must not wear garments that are unclean with the dust of his native place. You must remove your garments, send them away by

<sup>1</sup>The prince is here accused of the murder of his mother by this old man of the mountain, and he at once admits his sin. This is as different as midnight is different from midday to the statement of Jesus when accused of committing sin: "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" Jesus claimed to be, and was, sinless.

your servant, who, though a man in form, is but a beast, and clothe yourself with a garment of grass."

Prince Siddartha at once removed his garments, including the girdle of gems, gave them to his servant Shanoku, and then dismissed him with thanks for his kindness. Shanoku lamented bitterly the necessity for returning to the palace alone, but he finally submitted. The prince, having seen him well off on his way, followed the genius into the higher and yet deeper recesses of the mountain.

## CHAPTER VII.

### COMMOTION IN THE PALACE.

WHEN it was known in the palace that the prince had fled, there was great wonder and commotion. The king, his courtiers, the ladies of the court, and even the lowest servants united in lamenting him. The king called a special council of his household to inquire into the matter. He reviewed the life of the young prince, including the three prenatal years when he was enshrined in the person of Maya, his mother. He said that everything relating to him was wonderful; that the opinion or divination of the one wise old man out of the hundred he had called to the palace to pronounce on the future of the heir to his throne was proving all too true; that the prince was gentle, affectionate, kind and good and wise beyond his years, and that he had anticipated much satisfaction and comfort in seeing him take his seat on the throne in due time and wisely govern the nation. Having thus relieved his mind the king broke

out into loud weeping and said: "Alas! what shall I do if I have lost him forever?"

After this the king questioned all who were accustomed to reside in the palace as to the circumstances under which the prince fled away. All protested that they knew nothing except that Yasodhara had ordered them to retire to their respective rooms.

Yasodhara on being questioned said: "It was exactly as the others have reported. After all had retired for the night the prince arose from his bed—it was about midnight—and went toward the outer gate of the palace. I followed him until I heard the voices of the outer guard calling to each other, when I returned to my bed. I there waited with sleepless eyes until morning but, alas! he did not return."

Having said this she wept sorely.

The king in reply said: "It may be so. It is but reasonable that you should lament his absence. I firmly believe, however, that although Shanoku and the horse may never come back, the prince will send some message as to his whereabouts, because he is always so compassionate."

Yasodhara long continued to lament the absence

of Siddartha. She wept over his hard-heartedness in refusing her the privilege of accompanying him. She looked tenderly on the sleeve of the garment he had left in her hand as he tore himself away from her at the time of parting, and regretted that through its rending away she had been left behind.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### PRINCE SIDDARTHA'S NOVITIATE.

THE prince followed the genius, or sennin,<sup>1</sup> to his home. Arriving there a garment of grass, such as the sennin, or hermits who lived in the mountain, were accustomed to wear, was given to him. The prince was more rejoiced to receive the robe than if it had been made of the richest brocade. The sennin, having asked and learned the name of Siddartha, informed him that the name he had received from his parents could no longer be applied to him; he must have a new name, which he at once gave him.

The sennin then instructed the prince as follows:—

“Sitting on the seat of quiet contemplation and nourishing yourself only with herbs and water, you must study our art. There are five all-important commandments to be considered, of which religious meditation is one, absolute quietness of

<sup>1</sup>The term *sennin* means literally mountain-person. It involves the idea of asceticism and the study of occult things, usually religious.

mind another, the six senses purifying one, another, the quietness of nonentity another, and law-similarity another. These commandments are again divided and subdivided until they number ten, fifty, a hundred, five hundred, two thousand five hundred, three thousand; and each of these commandments has its related and associated austerities. There are also penalties involved in the breaking of any of these laws; hence take heed to yourself."

The sennin next instructed the prince to partake of the fruit that has eight merits, since that is the food most favored by the mountain wise men and ascetics like himself.

The prince, wearing the garment of grass, went out into a deep valley to pick herbs and to draw water.

On bringing them to his teacher, the sennin said: "There is a rational way of appeasing the dragon of the flowing stream. How did you draw the water? The same is also true of the picking of herbs. How did you do it?"

The prince replied: "I am but at the beginning of my new life, and I do not know anything. I only know when I see a stream that water is there, and when I see green buds that herbs are there."

The sennin said: "There are three dragons in

the water of differing colors, which moisten the heavens and the earth and so sustain the life of all living creatures. Water must be drawn by observing three laws and by three hearty endeavors, for only thus does the water do us good. Herbs also must be gathered in a similarly lawful manner. To draw water and gather herbs in any other way is to do unlawful deeds and to perversely destroy even the life of your mother and the soul of the world."

Having said this the sennin raised his staff and beat the prince about the head until he fell face forward to the earth in a swoon. On this the sennin calmly sat down on the prostrate youth and, calling him the cushion of the seat of Quiet Contemplation, performed the six hours of religious austerities. Having completed these exercises he cleansed the forehead of the still unconscious prince, warmed his cold bosom, and said in a loud voice, "Be thankful! be thankful!"

Strange to say the prince at once regained consciousness, opened his eyes, and looked at the sennin, who was bending over him. The latter now asked: "Are you born anew? I will now give you the staff of the two merits of our secret doctrines. I will also give you the new name of Shōfubiku."

太子仙人小太郎の事



The Sennin Beating the Prince.



When the prince took the staff from the hand of the sennin a bright light at once shone out from his own body. From this time on he gave himself night and day to the performance of the austerities taught him by his teacher, the sennin.

As occasion required the young novice clambered up the steep mountain sides and gathered the dried and fallen branches of the trees, which he bore on his shoulders back to the hut where he lived with his teacher.

The sennin took early opportunity to inform the prince that there are four gods of the mountain—or mountain gods—who care for their surroundings, and who make the trees, grass, and herbs their bodies or visible forms. The insects in the decayed branches of the trees are also the embodiments of some who have already been born in the human form but who are now, for past misdeeds, under the retributive law that compels them to rebirth even as insects in decaying wood. “How then did you in your ignorance break and tear those decayed branches asunder? There may have been insects in those torn and broken parts. It is indeed pitiful to think that of the insects you probably killed one of them may have been your mother reborn into the world in

that form! You have broken and torn those branches cruelly. What ought to be done to one who thus ruthlessly breaks the first great Buddhist commandment which is<sup>1</sup> 'Thou shalt not kill.' "

He then fell on the prince with his staff and beat him until he fainted and fell to the earth as one dead. On this the sennin cried out: "Heaven is pure. Earth is clean. Both interior and exterior are clean. Limitless life; perfect enlightenment be thine." He then warmed the cold bosom of the youth and said: "Shōfubiku, be thankful! be thankful!"

The prince immediately arose, sat up as one does when waked out of a sleep and dream, and bowing down before his teacher worshiped him.

The sennin said: "Truly you are now born anew. Henceforth you will have yielding power. I present you with this staff which has the merit of unsurpassed purity."

<sup>1</sup>The first of the five great Buddhist commandments is "Thou shalt not kill," but it does not refer to the killing of human beings as does the sixth commandment given on Mount Sinai. All life, whether of bird, beast, reptile, insect, or what not, is literally human to the Buddhist. On the sacred mountain in Japan, where the author spends a month every summer, there is one Buddhist temple the priests of which, when they walk out, carry a brush with which they sweep the path as they walk along, in order that they may destroy no insect life. They would thus keep this first great commandment.

As soon as the staff passed into the prince's hands he received six extraordinary powers and light again shone out from his body — hence his new name, Shōfubiku, and another name, Jōkwo-butsu, which means “the pure-light Buddha.”

During the night the sennin used the prince as a cushion on which to sit while performing the six hours of austerities. During the day the youth studied diligently the instructions given to him by his teacher. He so carefully observed all that was taught him that he did not break even one of the five, the ten, the fifty, the two hundred and fifty, the five hundred, the twenty-five hundred, or the three thousand Buddhistic commandments. By this immaculate observance of all these laws he plainly showed that he had come into the possession of the six extraordinary powers.

Prince Siddartha now changed his dress made of grass for one made of the leaves of the *shutara* tree, which he sewed together with the fiber of the wistaria vine for thread. Dressed in this garment he served the sennin for three full years. This period of the prince's life is called “the period of the performance of the austerities of his original and strong desires.”



## CHAPTER IX.

### PRINCE SIDDARTHA'S MIDDLE TERM.

THE sennin calling the prince to his side said to him, "Hearken to me, Shōfubiku! The filth of your five uncleannesses is now thoroughly cleansed, and your offenses of the five transgressions quite banished away by the studies and austerities of the past three years. The soul of your mother also has obtained deliverance, and she is now born as a heavenly creature on the floor of Indra and is waiting there until you become a full Buddha. When you attain to that she will fully enter the Buddha's paradise. Rise, therefore, and go to the mountain beyond this one and study the learning and perform the austerities taught by the sennin whose name is Karara, and thus obtain the desire of your heart."

The prince at once set out to find the abode of his new teacher, and while on the way was met by Karara himself, who said: —

"You are Shōfubiku, are you not? The object you have in view in coming to this place is indeed

a very grave one. Instruction and practice of the three great secret doctrines are taught here, and the sacred book out of which you will learn them surpasses all others, in whatever language they may be written."

The prince, bowing down reverently before the wise and aged sennin, said: "I do not regret even the loss of my life if I may here attain to a full knowledge of the sacred law, and I will make my best endeavor to learn and to practice all that you may graciously condescend to teach me."

Karara expressed his pleasure at the prince's resolute yet submissive and teachable spirit and gave him another new name appropriate to his advanced stage as a student and observer of the deep mysteries of Buddhistic wisdom and law. He then began to instruct him in the secret doctrines and painful austerities of which he was master, the study and observance of which were necessary to attain to a yet more advanced position on the way to full Buddhahood.

Karara-sennin informed the prince that the austerities to be performed were both numerous and of many kinds, and that while performing them he must eat only the fruit of a certain tree for his food, and that only once each day, at the midday

hour, while water he must not drink at all. The place where the austerities were to be performed was seven or eight miles distant, the prince was told, and was a remarkable stone or rock above a celebrated waterfall on the mountain whose peak could be seen from the place where they were standing.

“During the first one hundred days,” said the teacher, “the austerities must be performed in the standing attitude on that rock. During the second one hundred days they are to be performed while sitting on it with the feet and legs under the body. During the third one hundred days they are to be performed while lying on it. During each period no sleep can be allowed nor any thought. These,” said the sennin, “are the three austerities of the way here taught, and are called the natural non-living life. Take heed, therefore, that you make no mistake.”

He then gave the prince a black garment made from the fiber of the wistaria vine.

The prince at once entered on the practice of the austerities of the way of the three secret doctrines. Even during the long days of spring he partook of no other food than that prescribed by his teacher; hence he became greatly emaci-

ated and in appearance like a withered tree. During the longest and hottest days of summer he never sat down while practicing the austerities that were to be observed in the standing position; nor did he once stretch out his legs while doing those that were to be practiced in the sitting position. During the winter months, although the cold wind pierced his body as with sharp swords, he never added anything to the single garment of wistaria fiber that he had worn from the first.

On one occasion he fell asleep through utter exhaustion, when two beings from the Buddhist paradise appeared to him and said: "Look! The one who is wearing the black dress there, sitting on that rock of quiet contemplation, is overcome with sleepiness. Surely he is not a true devotee, but a heretic. Let us bind him hand and foot."

Suiting the action to the word, they took a black cord, and after binding him up tied him securely to an ancient tree.

The exhausted prince swooned away, but after a little returned to consciousness. His first thought was to confess his wrongdoing in falling asleep, but he stopped himself in time, else he would have broken another law, for the austerity

he had been engaged in practicing was the one of absolute vocal silence. He was heartily ashamed of his sin in falling asleep and in being thus bound as a criminal in consequence, but he resolutely held his tongue.

The two heavenly beings, seeing the mental struggle, the shame, and the absolute silence of the prince, said to each other: "Truly the man is a veritable sennin performing his lawful austerities. Let us release him and return him to the rock from which we took him."

The prince was exceedingly grateful for this act of the heavenly youths, and he reverently bowed down and worshiped them. They, however, at once ascended up into the clouds and passed out of his sight as though they had been but a vision of the night.

During the three years of his stay with Kararasennin, Prince Siddartha continued to perform the standing, the sitting, and the reclining austerities and to study the secret doctrines of his teacher.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SNOW MOUNTAIN.

AT the expiration of the three years Karara said to the prince: "You have now finished the severe austerities of the three secret doctrines, and in order to yet further perfect yourself in Buddhistic wisdom and law you must go up to the snow mountain, where you will serve and be taught by two yet more celebrated sennin. I present you with two staves, the one for your right hand and the other for your left. With their aid you will be able to make better progress than you could do without them."

A sennin named Arara now put in an appearance and said to the prince: "It is indeed the delight of delights that you have now finished the austerities of this mountain peak. I also congratulate you on the possession of the two staves that you hold in your hand. One of them has the virtue of driving away all demons, while the other has the virtue of expelling all uncleanness. Of the two other objects in your possession,

one has the virtue of delivering all living things; this virtue is broad and strong. The other object has the virtue of extraordinary power, and the one who possesses it can even fly through the air. The snow mountain to which you are going is more precipitous than the one on which you have been living, and the valleys are deeper and darker; hence you must go there relying on the merits and virtues of these staves."

The prince had become exceedingly emaciated and weak through the long observances of the severe austerities of the rock, and he went on his way with feeble and tottering steps. He had not gone very far before his strength entirely failed and he fell prone to the earth, unable to rise again.

The demons of the air, seeing the prostrate prince, and hoping to hinder him in his endeavors to attain to Buddahood, decided to inform the king, his father, of the young man's whereabouts and condition. One of them straightway flew to the distant palace and, assuming the appearance of an inhabitant of paradise, met the king and informed him of the austerities which the prince had been practicing during the past six years; of his intention to press on to the snow mountain

in order to engage in yet more severe exercises; of his emaciated and weak condition, and of his utter collapse while on his journey.

The king, on hearing the pitiful story which the demon had told him, emphasized with the words, "Pity him! pity him!" thought the message must be heaven sent. Hence he at once ordered out his chariot, that he might hasten to the aid of his loved and long-lost son. One of his ministers, however, dissuaded him from setting out so hastily and advised that a royal messenger be first sent with orders to bring Prince Siddartha back with him if he found him.

The king called Udai, Maya's chief chamberlain and the prince's especial protector from his earliest years, into his presence, and after reciting to him the information he had received, commanded him to set out at once to the place where the prince was supposed to be lying and to bring him back to the palace without fail.

Udai mounted the fastest horse in the royal stables and after riding three consecutive days reached the mountain region indicated by the king. After protracted search hither and thither Udai at length found a being who had a little the appearance of the prince. Grieving over his



changed appearance, he went up to Siddartha and told him the reason of his coming and of the king's command that he should escort him back to the palace.

The prince was so weak that had it not been for his breathing slightly Udai would have thought him dead; his mind, however, was clear and his heart as firm as a rock.

He said to Udai: "What foolishness you speak! It is my wish to hear from some messenger who will encourage me to continue in my studies and austerities and not one who would urge me to return to the fiery world."

He then closed his eyes, which he did not open again. His mind also was as firmly set as a mountain.

Udai lamented so bitterly over the words and determination of the prince that, pitying him, Siddartha raised himself up with his left hand, pointed with his right hand up into the sky, and shook his fingers.

Immediately there fell from amongst the clouds a leaf of the tala tree on which the following words were written: "Birds that flock together and lodge on the branches of a single tree scatter far apart as soon as dawn surrounds them, and

being scattered they no longer recognize each other."

"Thus it is," said the prince, "with the separation of the living."

He now folded the leaf, gave it to Udai, and commanded him to deliver it to the king with all speed. Udai, realizing that further argument would be in vain, sorrowfully returned alone to the palace.

The prince deeply regretted that because of extreme physical exhaustion his mind had become dull and inactive, yet he grasped his staff and resolutely continued his journey toward the snow mountain. Looking toward the south he saw a thick black cloud of smoke and in the midst of the smoke tongues of flame blazing forth, and in the midst of the flames five hundred starving demons lamenting their famished condition and weeping tears of blood.

The prince, arresting his steps, turned to the famished demons, who seemed to be appealing to him for help, and said: "Since thought is not, neither misery nor happiness has any master. Nothing is real. My own self even does not exist. Laws only are realities. Laws also are like a dream; like a vision; like a bubble of

water ; like the dew ; like lightning. Understand this, I pray you."

The blazing fire and the curling smoke at once changed into the loveliest of clouds having five colors, while the five hundred starving demons became transformed into five hundred beings from paradise. They now spread their wings, and, ascending up into the clouds, shouted in unison as they rose high in the air : "In coming days you will attain to Buddhahood and enjoy its best fruits."

Again looking about him, Prince Siddartha saw a large number of gravestones standing at the heads of many ancient graves. He also saw a lovely female descending from paradise bearing a flower in her hand. Alighting before a certain grave this female made an offering of the flower and worshiped with tears of joy rolling down her cheeks.

The prince approached and asked her why she offered the flower to the old grave and why she worshiped it.

The heavenly being replied : "This graveyard belongs to an adjoining town which lies just beyond this forest. I lived there until last year, when I died and was buried in this grave. While

I lived in the transient world I faithfully worshiped the three treasures and filled to the full my duties to my own parents and the parents of my husband. I was always compassionate towards all the members of the household and never grieved any one or broke a single heart by unkind or unfilial conduct. Because I served with such devotion, making a sacrifice of my very life for my family, I am now reborn as a being of paradise as you see me now. I come to this place to offer a flower and to worship my former body because I am so grateful to it that I was enabled to perform my duties while in the transient world and thus win rebirth as a happy being of paradise."

Thus saying, she prostrated herself before the prince and worshiped him.

The prince again looking about saw a fierce two-horned, three-toed, wolf-toothed demon dig open a grave and drag out the buried form, with which he seemed to be intensely angry. He beat, bit, and tore it asunder, blowing also flames of fire out of his own mouth into all parts of it.

The prince asked the demon why he was so angry with the lifeless form and why he maltreated it so cruelly.

The demon replied: "While I lived in my causal stage in the transient world this corpse was my own body. I was then envious and jealous of the prosperity of the well-to-do, and I despised and misused those who, however they struggled, did not obtain a competency. I quarreled with my friends and I fought with those with whom I was not intimate. Because of all this I am reborn as a demon of hell; hence I hate this corpse and take delight in thus exhuming and maltreating it."

The prince, on hearing this interpretation of the demon's ghoulish deeds, said as if in prayer: "The past and the future of life and of death are as a dream. From the beginning also all laws are naturally and of themselves extinguishable. Good and evil therefore are but one and the same thing. The just and the unjust also are without difference — the good and the evil, the just and the unjust, being naturally alike and all but as a gust of wind that suddenly sweeps over us and as suddenly passes away."

The prince now shook his staff toward the sky and instantly a bright light shone forth from above. The angel from paradise and the demon from hell now prostrated themselves before the

prince and worshiped him; and then with the shining light they instantly faded away out of sight.<sup>1</sup>

Siddartha then again set out on his way toward the snow mountain. As he pushed on he found the path a very difficult one. Rocks, ice, snow, and cloud-enveloped precipitous peaks made progress slow and very wearying. While resting at the foot of a tree a heavenly youth appeared to him and said: "It is certainly very sad to see you so weary. I fear you have become proud of having completed but one of the ten austerities that must be performed, and have become indifferent and idle. If you become negligent for a single occasion only, the filth of the five uncleannesses will fall on you and enter into all parts of your being — your eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and mind. Out of these five uncleannesses the three diseases from which millions of other diseases come, will attack you. If this should befall you, all the aus-

<sup>1</sup>The paradise or heavens of the Buddhists, as also their numerous hells, are not like the heaven and hell of the Christians, the final abodes of the good and of the wicked respectively. They are only stages on the journey toward Buddhahood, or perfection, which must be reached while one is a *human* being. The supernatural of the Buddhists is, consequently, vastly inferior to the natural. The demon of one stage of existence may be an angel in another, a serpent in another, or an insect, and yet, after myriads of rebirths and higher endeavors ultimately attain to Buddhahood *as a human being* and then, on dying, cease from rebirth and become extinct.

terities you have already practiced and the studies you have pursued will be wasted and thrown away. While leading this life of renunciation why should you regret the loss of strength or of life itself? This mountain is under the protection of heaven. On its high terrace the Buddhas receive their perfect enlightenment. With the dull spirit you now possess you can never attain to that height. What a pitiful creature you are if you are thus hindered and exhausted by a little snow in your path! Encouraging yourself you must continue steadfastly to exercise yourself in all the austerities, and never look to others for aid or help of any kind. Having entered on the path of sacrifice and renunciation, why do you now begrudge your life? If your own moon shines clear and bright, you need no other light through the longest and darkest night. The snow about and above you will shine with the luster of gems if your own inward light shine forth on it. The high terrace of snow is regarded by some as a house, by others as water; the starving demons think it flaming fire, while those in paradise think it a massive ruby. This height whose beauty is beyond description is thus regarded in these four different ways: the heretics are troubled by it,

thinking it a destructive storm of snow; the demons are distressed by it, thinking it showers of swords and spears falling on them; while the Buddhas regard it as the full flower cluster and loveliest efflorescence of the sacred law. Go on your way," said the youth, "and I will be your guide."

The heavenly youth, having thus spoken, set out on the upward way, riding at times on a cloud and at other times being borne onward and upward by the wind.

Prince Siddartha, fearing that the uncleanness of his causal stage or past birth-life must still be on him, was very happy in having met this youth and made his acquaintance. He raised one of his staves and struck the earth with it, saying as he did so, "Clouds of unhindered endeavors are like the sky for nothingness which is the great perfection."

Light immediately shone forth from his own person and he was able to see his way clearly up to the high terrace of the snow mountain, although he had to clamber over rocks, ice, and snow, and through winds and enveloping clouds to reach it.

Pushing resolutely on his way the prince saw



coming toward him from the direction of the summit of the snow mountain a being with long yellow hair who was dressed in a garment of leaves which were sewed together with the fiber of the wistaria vine. This sacred being bore a staff in his hand and came down towards the prince, walking on the air and never once touching the ground with his feet.

Approaching Siddartha he said: "It is very extraordinary that you should so strongly desire to perform the austerities of this mountain. Come with me and I will instruct you about them."

Without more ado the aged ascetic led the prince up to a high terrace and said: "Now hearken to me. This mountain is under the especial care of the heavens, and the several terraces or peaks on it are places for the performance of self-sacrificing austerities. If you are negligent for but a single moment in the most rigid observance of these austerities, the heavens themselves will afflict you with dire punishments. Here are in particular three firmly set terraces or elevations. The one to the east is called the Nine Intelligence, or Real Enlightenment, Terrace. The one in the south is the Intelligence of

Mysteries, or Equal Enlightenment, Terrace. The one in the west is the Law and Property, or the Mystery Enlightening, Terrace.

“The appropriate austerities of thinking and doing you must perform three times a day on each of these three terraces, making nine such devotions every day. The peaks are at least twenty miles apart from each other. Do not be negligent for a single moment in performing these austere duties; and every night return to this hut beside which we now stand. Seating yourself after the manner of the ascetics — with the legs folded under the body — with a fixed, pure, extinguished, mysterious, and true mind stedfastly contemplate and adore the heavens. Be diligent in the performance of these austerities. I who now instruct you have performed these duties and lived in this hut.”

The prince, prostrating himself before this august being, worshiped him, and then betook himself to one of the distant peaks in order to at once enter on the duties which it was his desire and delight to perform.

The cold wind blew fiercely over the snow-covered peaks and enveloped him as with a cloud while he journeyed from one peak to another and

performed the self-sacrificing austerities appropriate to each of the three. At night he returned to the lonely hut, where he sat long hours in the attitude of a recluse and continued his religious meditations. There was neither fire nor fuel in the hut during this drear and wintry weather, nor was there aught in the shape of food to satisfy his hunger and warm his body—nothing but cold water for him to drink. Notwithstanding this, ever as he returned to the hut a warm, soft wind full of sweet fragrance blew steadily through it, reviving his spirits and restoring his strength as with a sufficiency of food, raiment, and fire. This was indeed a wonderful thing, yet it was but the natural reward of the merits obtained by the faithful performance of the appropriate austerities on the distant and snow-covered peaks of the mountain.

One morning, as the prince set out from the hut, he was lifted from his feet by a cold, fierce blast of wind and hurled far away and then tossed down into a deep valley where he was buried in ice and snow. He was utterly unable to extricate himself, but a heavenly youth appeared to him and assured him that no harm should befall him. It was not long after this

that the prince found himself again on the summit of one of the peaks, where he performed his daily austerities, but his body was completely encrusted with glistening ice and snow.

It is impossible to describe in detail all the self-sacrificing austerities the prince performed both day and night while on the snow mountain. It must suffice to say that they are called "the mysterious austerities." After completing these he entered on and completed others called "the law austerities." These also are beyond the power of words to describe. Three full years were thus devoted by Prince Siddartha to the performance of the austerities of the three wisdoms on the snow mountain.

On one occasion, while Prince Siddartha was performing the usual austerities on one of the highest peaks of the mountain, he heard the sound of a voice coming from a deep valley near by. The words recited by the voice were two verses of a sacred book which had for their burden the evanescence and transitoriness of all things as the law of life and of death. The prince listened intently for the remaining two verses of the psalm, but silence deep and profound was the only response.

Interested to know who could have uttered the unfinished quotation, he set out from the summit of the peak on which he had been performing his devotions and plowed his way through the deep snow to the valley below. On reaching the bottom he was confronted by a demon who had eight faces and nine feet and legs.

The prince asked the demon if he were the being who had recited the passage from the sacred books. The demon replying in the affirmative, the prince asked him why he left the passage unfinished.

The demon said: "I did not finish the quotation because I am almost dead from exhaustion through lack of food. I had no strength left for further utterance."

The prince then asked: "What do you eat?" The demon replied: "I eat flesh only."

The prince at once replied: "I will give you myself for food on the condition that you now recite to me the two remaining verses of the psalm you were repeating a while ago."

The demon objected to doing so and insisted that the prince should first give him his body in order that he might enjoy a hearty meal and so

obtain the vigor necessary to the completion of the recitation.

The prince assented to this arrangement, saying, "The life of one is at times sustained by the life of another. When such is the case the other one becomes one's self. For this reason some give their lives that others may live, and live more vigorously, and so the myself and the other become one and the same person."

Having said this he at once leaped into the wide-open mouth of the hungry demon. The demon's mouth instantly changed into a wholly unfolded lotus flower and recited the remaining portion of the stanzas heard by the prince when he was on the peak of the snow mountain. The burden of the verses was that life and death alike bring extinction and that extinction is joy and blessedness.

The entire form of the demon now changed into a cloud which spread itself out and was wafted away to the summit of the peak, bearing the prince with it.

Depositing the prince on the summit the demon said: "I am not a demon at all, but a Buddha. From the eternity of the past you have ever desired to give yourself and all your good works

to deliver all living things in all the ten directions of the universe. Your austerities are now at an end and you will speedily acquire that perfect enlightenment which will enable you to guide and save all living things. This rock on which you stand is called The Stone or Precious Jewel of Perfect Enlightenment. The Buddhas all obtain their full enlightenment here. This rock came up out of the depths of the earth and is both firm and pure. The grass you see about you is called the grass of good fortune and is to be your seat when you obtain perfect enlightenment. The heavens above you will become a roof to protect you while you are waiting here."

The ex-demon now introduced the prince to several Bodhisatva eminences and then said:—

"The time when the one who is to be the king of Buddhas, the guide and the life-giver of the three thousand worlds, is to obtain perfect enlightenment has now fully arrived. It is clear that he is entitled to the most exalted rank and to the right to say, 'I only am noble both under and above the heavens.'"

The ex-demon now took his departure, but in his place there appeared, accompanied by a great trembling of the earth, a host of incarnate Bud-

dhas, Bodhisatvas, and Mahatmas, who reverently and with clasped hands bowed down and worshiped the prince, saying, "Teacher of the three thousand worlds and of those on the six paths of transmigration; Buddha most perfect in all the ten directions of the universe; Buddha whose light is infinite; Teacher who guides equally all the innumerable company of living things; real teacher and perfect Buddha, — all hail!"

There now appeared on the features of the prince the thirty-two signs and eighty marks of Buddhahood which shone brightly forth and sent out their rays into all the Buddhist worlds throughout the entire ten directions of the universe. The light from those worlds also shone more brightly forth; and the prince knew thereby that his unquenchable desire to guide and save all the living was to be satisfied.

The richness and glory of that moment no pen can fully describe.

The prince, having obtained the three lights and the six supernatural powers, now looked over the three thousand worlds from the highest peak of the snow mountain and was moved with distress at what he beheld. He saw that all living creatures were struggling and wrestling with each



other in order to make for themselves a residence and a home in the prison of a fiery and a burning world. Every one was either drinking the wine of ignorance and excess, pushing the car of selfishness and wickedness, sleeping soundly in utter negligence and indifference, or drowning themselves in the sea of evil changes.

The prince renewed the resolve he had made to do all in his power to save all the living of every sort and to bring them into affinity with himself. "All the living are my children," he said. "If my children enter the fiery prison, I too will enter it. If all the living are afflicted, I too will be afflicted. It is for the purpose of saving them I have obtained these supernatural powers."

With his heart full of deep sympathy the prince took his departure from the summit of the snow mountain where he had received his full enlightenment as a Buddha and where he had obtained the assurance that he was to be the teacher, guide, and savior of all the living.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE PRINCE TURNS HOMEWARD.

PRINCE SIDDARTHA now removed from the snow mountain, and for a time performed his austerities at the abode of the aged saint who first instructed him as to his duties on his arrival at the sacred mountains. At this time the one who became the prince's most celebrated disciple, together with one thousand one hundred and fifty others, became his pupils and followers.

The prince now changed frequently from place to place, preaching and making disciples wherever he went. On reaching the city of Hankiya he sent messengers to his father, the king, to notify him of his approaching return.

The messengers were received by the old retainer Udai, who took charge of the message concerning his return sent by the prince after twelve years of absence from his home, and reported it to the king.

The king, on hearing the report of the return of his son, rejoiced as one would who should see the

unfolding of the wondrous flower that blooms but once in a thousand years, and ordered the bearers of the welcome news into his presence. When the salutations were finished the king addressed the messengers as follows:—

“It is with the greatest delight that I learn that the prince has completed his studies, and that after an absence of twelve years he is now about to return to his home. The years have passed away like a dream of the night. Urge the prince to return at the earliest possible moment and inquire of him whether he will return to my palace or to the palace that was erected for him before his marriage, or whether I shall build a new palace for him.”

The messengers at once returned to the prince, who was now called by the name of Nyorai since he had received his perfect enlightenment, and Udai, the prince's old retainer went with them.

When Udai met the prince he was overcome with joy and broke out into loud weeping of delight. When he became calm again he reported the king's message and asked for a reply.

The prince responding said: “It is indeed my duty to see the king my father as soon as possible. I do not wish, however, to dwell either in

his own palace or in the palace once erected for me or in a new palace. I desire to abide in the mausoleum where Maya was entombed, but I do not wish to have the king informed of this."

In the king's palace the most elaborate preparations were made to appropriately receive the long-lost prince on his return. The courtiers, officials, and servants vied with each other in this endeavor; and when the day fixed for the prince's arrival came to hand they all arrayed themselves in their richest apparel in order to do honor to the occasion. Multitudes of the king's subjects came from all parts of the country to welcome their future king.

Kyodomi, the prince's aunt, together with the twelve particular and several hundred other court ladies, also prepared themselves to greet and welcome the prince upon his return.

## CHAPTER XII.

### A PALACE EPISODE DURING THE PRINCE'S ABSENCE.

YASODHARA, the bride who aided the prince in his escape from the palace, and who hoped in return and as a reward for her devotion to accompany him, remained in the palace full of sorrow during the twelve long years of his absence. She cherished and wept over the sleeve of his coat that he left with her when he broke away from her parting embrace. She frequently took the empty sleeve in her hand and addressed it as though it could understand what she said. During the day she hid herself away in her chamber. Her nights were passed in sleeplessness and weeping. During this period she became conscious of the fact that she was to become a mother. This, instead of bringing comfort to her heart, increased her sorrow. Palace gossip had little of good to say about the prospective birth. The prince, it was said, had always so intense a desire for conversion and enlightenment that he passed

his nights while in the palace in meditation and in study; hence the child could not possibly be his.

When Yasodhara heard of the gossip and suspicion, she thought within herself that they were not at all unreasonable; yet as she knew that she never went outside the limits of her own chambers, she was sure that she had no reason for doubting her own uprightness of conduct. She did not, therefore, trouble herself in the least about the prevailing gossip and rumored scandal.

The rumors ultimately reached the ears of Kyodomi, the sister of Maya—the prince's mother—and she reported them to the king.

The king declined to investigate the matter, saying, "There have been so many extraordinary things in connection with the life of the prince from its very beginning that this may perhaps be but another of them."

In course of time a son was born to Yasodhara and the gossips gave him the name among themselves of Prince Shinobu (or concealment) saying, "Since we do not know who his father may be, that is the appropriate name for him."

The king gave orders that the babe should be cared for and brought up privately in the apartments of his mother.

When the child was five years of age some birds of paradise built their nests, laid their eggs, and brought forth and fed their young among the delicate bamboo trees that formed a little grove in one of the gardens that opened out from Yasodhara's private apartments.

The prince, seeing the young birds at play, said one day to his mother: "Even the birds have a father and a mother. Who is my father, and where is he?"

Yasodhara replied that his father had left the palace prior to his birth, in order to obtain conversion and enlightenment, and that on leaving he had given her a sleeve from his garment as keepsake. She then exhibited the sleeve to the boy and gave it to him. The child, after examining it, returned it to her, saying, "I will entrust this to your care and keeping until I meet my father."

Yasodhara, on hearing of the approaching return of the prince (or Nyorai, as he was now called), was glad to think that she should meet him with a son and welcome him back to his home. The youth — now nearing his twelfth<sup>1</sup> year — was also

<sup>1</sup> There are discrepancies in the narrative as to Prince Shinobu's age. On page 79 it says that he was to be born six years from Siddartha's departure. Siddartha was gone but twelve years, and here it is stated that he was nearing his twelfth year. On page 130 the prince was seven

delighted with the thought that he would soon meet his father, and that then his mother's tears would all be wiped away.

years old when he first inquired about his father. On page 136 Sid-dartha reads a writing which declares that the prince would be born three years after his father's going away. These irreconcilable statements are to be attributed to the tendency of legendary stories to inconsistencies.—ED.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE PALACE LADIES PREPARE FOR THE PRINCE'S RETURN.

KYODOMI sent messengers to the ladies of the prince's palace to notify them of the return of their master. She sent new and beautiful garments to two of the brides of the prince and requested them to appear, when fully dressed, at her apartments with the twelve court ladies and the one hundred female attendants.

Kyodomi informed those ladies that the king was as delighted at the return of the prince as though he had lived to see the unfolding of the flower that blooms but once in a thousand years; and that he and his courtiers, and the baseborn masses also, were arraying themselves in their best in order to welcome and honor the returning one. "This is sufficient reason," Kyodomi said to the brides and ladies, "why you should array yourselves in the garments I hereby send by these messengers."

The message to Yasodhara was of a less flattering nature. It went as follows:—

“Kyodomi is angry with you for your willfulness, sullenness, and obstinacy — though there may be reasons enough for your being so. The eyes of a man are as a mirror made of crystal, and his ears are as tense as a carpenter’s line. It is not easy to truly judge one who does as she pleases. The best thing to do with her is to let her severely alone. I therefore send no request for you to appear before me with the other brides and the ladies of the court.”

Yasodhara heard the shameful message with the utmost patience, and said to the bearer: “Kyodomi’s anger is quite reasonable. I have nothing to say against her message, since it is my conduct that makes her angry. I regret only that I am misunderstood, and punished for my loss of the three great treasures. The truth and sincerity of my heart no one can know.”

Kyodomi’s messengers and all others in Yasodhara’s presence sympathized deeply with the rejected bride and mother, and lamented together as they left her presence.

Yasodhara retired to her room and indulged in a series of sad reveries, even though she regretted that she sorrowed so much over her hard fate.

After a period of musing she called the young

prince to her side and said to him : “ Listen to me ! It is now many years since I lived with your father. He left the palace while he was still a prince. When I assisted him to the accomplishment of his desire to escape, in order that he might study and gain perfect enlightenment, he told me that he should never forget my faithfulness, and that when he had attained to the object of which he was in search he would see me again. On parting he gave me a charm enclosed in a bag made of gold brocade, which I have kept carefully wrapped up in the sleeve of this garment which you have already seen. You may perhaps remember that when you asked me as to whether you had a father, and of his whereabouts, you were seven years old. At that time I gave you the sleeve to keep, but you returned it to me with the request that I take charge of it until you should meet your father in person. I now return it to you and you must go to your father where he now is and present it, with yourself, to him as witness of your sonship. If the prince does not accept the sleeve and charm as true proof of your relation to him, I shall not be in the least sorry to be banished by the king to some far-off distant isle or mountain or to be beheaded.

I have no fear of any kind of punishment, because I have committed no sin. My desire to establish your relation of sonship to the absent prince shall never die. Though the sand on the seashore may cease to exist, yet my desire shall live on until it is fully accomplished. I will go with you to the very ends of the earth. Though the mountains be as high as heaven, and the valleys deep as hell; though fire and water, earthquake and cloud should bar the way, yet I will go with you to seek and find your father. I am resolved to wash away my disgrace and shame by giving you to your father in person. The anger of the king against me, however, is reasonable and I have nothing whatever to say against it."

Yasodhora, taking her son by the hand, now set out for the place appointed for the public reception of Prince Siddartha by the king and his court.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### YASODHARA'S SON MEETS THE PRINCE HIS FATHER.

GREAT multitudes thronged the streets that led to the direction from which Nyorai, the returning prince, was expected to arrive. Nyorai, however, not liking the noisy recognition of so many, decided to change the form of his body and of his features so that he might not be recognized. Having supernatural power as well as supernatural wisdom, he changed himself into an Arhat.<sup>1</sup> He was thus enabled to mix with the people without being recognized by them. Although the multitude scanned anxiously the face and form of every Arhat, of whom fifteen hundred accompanied the prince as he

<sup>1</sup> Sinnet, in his book entitled "Esoteric Buddhism," says: "Arhat is a Buddhist designation. In reality, the Arhats and the Mahatmas are the same men. By whatever name such *illuminati* are called, they are the adepts of occult knowledge, sometimes spoken of in India now as The Brothers, and the custodians of the spiritual science which has been handed down to them by their predecessors."—page 8. The Arhats are therefore experts in Buddhistic learning, ascetics, austerities, and in wonder-working, but have not attained to the exalted rank of Buddhahood.

entered the palace town, the prince remained unrecognized. In their bewilderment the eager masses bowed down and worshiped all the Arhats at once.

The fifteen hundred Arhats who accompanied the prince were divided into three companies; namely, one company on his right, one on his left, and one in front and rear. This immense body of men, bearing banners and garlands of flowers and making music on the harp, the flute, the drum, the flageolet, and cymbals, escorted Nyorai to the place appointed by the king for the public reception of his long-lost son.

The king, surrounded by his ministers of state and his courtiers, awaited Nyorai's arrival in solemn splendor. Kyodomi, surrounded by several hundreds of court ladies arrayed in their richest apparel, sat behind hanging screens on the northern side of the hall. Two of the prince's brides, with their retinue of twelve court ladies and a hundred female attendants, also took their places behind appropriate screens. Yasodhara also took her place with her son by her side among this party.

Nyorai, the prince, made his appearance wearing the usual black dress of the Arhats, with a

scarf, made of the leaves of a sacred tree sewn together with the fiber of the wistaria vine, thrown over his shoulder.

When he and his companions entered the audience chamber they chanted to the accompaniment of their musical instruments from their sacred books and then bowed in worship.

Not only was the dress of Nyorai like the dress of his companions, but his face also was of the same dark hue, and like them he had long black hair.

The king and all his court, both male and female, scanned the black company most intently, but not one of them could tell which was Prince Siddartha or whether he were present at all. Even Yasodhara could not recognize the one whose absence she had so long lamented.

A happy thought now occurred to her, and she spoke to her son and said: "Your father whom you have been so eagerly inquiring after for so long a time is among that body of Arhats who are worshiping before us. Take this sleeve and the charm bag and go and give it to one of them—the one whom you think may be your father. If you do not do this, it will not be worth while for you to ever say to me again

that you desire to know who your father is and where he is."

Truly the mind of Yasodhara is purer than the richest and rarest gem!

The young prince obeyed his mother with alacrity, but when he would have passed by the guards who were between the Arhats and the king he was stopped and asked his errand. He replied that he was bearing gifts to Nyorai; hence he was allowed to pass on into the body of the hall and among the Arhats. After glancing about here and there for a while the youth walked up to one of the Arhats and presented him with the sleeve and charm bag that his mother had entrusted to him, saying that they were gifts to him.

Nyorai, Prince Siddartha, turned to his companions and said: "The youth is my son who was born after I left the palace to obtain enlightenment. When I was leaving the palace his mother was full of regret at my departure and grasped me by the sleeve. I tore myself away from her by main force, but this sleeve parted from my dress and remained in her hands."

He then asked the youth his name, who



replied that as he had never been out of the palace he had no other name but that of prince.

Nyorai now decided that for the sake of his son he would discover himself in his real form and features. Repeating the words: "Heaven is pure; the earth is pure; the external and internal are pure; the six senses are pure; the unchangeable truth-like mysterious enlightenment with absolute quietness are clean, and the desires of all living things are now satisfied," he was changed from the inferior form to the superior one of light unhindered, which has the thirty-two marks and eighty signs of perfect Buddhahood. When this transformation in his appearance took place the Arhats and all the king's courtiers bowed down and worshiped him.

Nyorai now said: "The things relating to the young prince my son—the causes and effects that had to do with his birth—are written and fully explained in a writing which is in this charm bag. I will now show to you who this youth really is." Nyorai opened the bag and read as follows (this was addressed to Yasodhara of course):—

"After three years of my absence from you

a son will be born to you, who will become a great and good man and a learned priest. He represents me in my causal stage."

On hearing this the Arhats bowed down and worshiped the young prince as they had already worshiped his father.

The king, not having previously met the youth, inquired what boy it was concerning whom Nyorai had been speaking, and whom the Arhats were worshiping.

When told that it was the son of Yasodhara, he said: "It is not wise to think of anything as extraordinary that is relating to Nyorai. What an intelligent looking boy the prince is! How unfathomably pure is the heart of Yasodhara! How foolish I was not to see the boy until now! Truly virtue is deeper than the profoundest silence!"

The king now invited Prince Siddartha, or Nyorai as he was now called by his fellow religionists, to give the court an address on the religion he now professed.

Nyorai took a lowly position and said that he should speak concerning the true wisdom.

The king objected to the lowly seat taken by Nyorai and urged him to take a higher one.

Nyorai, after making due obeisance to the king, obeyed his royal father's command and at once began his address, which for substance was as follows:—

“I intend to speak only concerning the one heavenly path on which all living things may move, although wicked of heart, and so attain to the real calm of the ‘soul. The object of all teaching and of all learning is to know of the favors and kindnesses of others, to be grateful for them, and to put them to practical use. This is the most important article of our faith.

“There are seven kindnesses or favors for which we must be grateful. The first of these is the favor of heaven.<sup>1</sup> If we do not recognize this favor and acknowledge it, we shall stray into a dark path and become utterly unable to distinguish night from day or good from evil, and receive appropriate punishment.

“The second favor is that of the king. If we do not recognize and acknowledge this favor, we shall be banished from the realm and all its blessings, or be condemned to destruction by fire.

<sup>1</sup>The use of the term heaven here is apt to mislead those brought up in Christian lands. It does not mean the heaven or home of an independent, intelligent, wise, and just God, but a vague, uncertain something outside of man which no Buddhist attempts to explain.

“The third favor is that of parents. If we do not recognize and acknowledge that, we shall be condemned to take on the form of cripples, of brutes, or of devils.

“The fourth favor is that of teachers. If we do not recognize this, we shall go astray into the dark ways of ignorance, and suffer a punishment appropriate to our offense.

“The fifth favor is that of friends. All who do not recognize this favor will become cruel and law-breaking people, and they will receive the just punishment of heaven.

“The sixth favor is that of the family. Those who are not grateful for this will become beggars and non-human creatures, and will receive punishment appropriate to their beggarly non-human heart and conduct.

“The seventh favor is that which comes from all living things. All who do not recognize and acknowledge this will become serpents and scorpions, and will be doomed to the torture of swords.

“These are called the seven paths of the first importance. True morality consists in the knowledge and recognition of them. Ignorance of and disobedience to them leaves one as a brute beast or as a block of wood or of stone.

“These seven paths or commandments have their faith-features and their faith-pleasures; hence do not be afraid to receive this instruction and to be guided by it.”<sup>1</sup>

The king was exceedingly delighted with this sermon of his long-absent son, and declared with tears of joy that no sermon superior to it had ever been preached. He said that it was both reasonable, good, and worthy of acceptance by all.

The courtiers and all present now prostrated themselves before Nyorai and worshiped him, after which the king withdrew and returned to his palace.

This was the beginning by Prince Siddartha, Nyorai, or Buddha — for all three names are appropriated to him — of his efforts to guide all living things into the path of absolute calm.

The king was not the only one of the imposing audience who was impressed with the discourse of Nyorai. The son of a subject prince thought the sermon so reasonable, so eloquent, and so noble in its sentiments that he decided to seek conversion

<sup>1</sup> If the reader will compare this first sermon of Buddha to his relatives, friends, and disciples, with the sermon by Jesus on the Mount, they will understand the general difference there is between the two great teachers. The Sermon on the Mount has never yet been paralleled by any teacher of any nation, no matter how great or wise or good he may have been.

and enlightenment for himself. He said that a true teacher is like a needle, and a disciple like thread; he therefore resolved to secure such a teacher, even though he might have to travel to the ends of the earth to find him. He declared that the saying of Buddha that the way of the wicked world was growing nearer and stronger in its power every day, and that the way of conversion and enlightenment was growing more distant and weak every night, was most reasonable and true, and that if he for himself intended to set out at all for the prosecution of the higher studies and the attainment of the highest virtues, he must set about it at once. This decision he carried into immediate execution, and in a short time he received the power of understanding many of the profoundest teachings.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CHANGES IN YASODHARA'S LIFE.

IN meekness and in gentleness Yasodhara exceeded all other women. One day Kyodomi, on meeting her, said: "The past is as a dream. I regret very much my suspicious anger and evil words and I sympathize with you and appreciate the patience and gentleness you have at all times shown. Hereafter I wish that you would regard me as your mother and I will regard and treat you as my own daughter. One so sincere and so faithful as you have been is deserving of all praise and honor. I trust that you will change your residence and come and live always with me."

Yasodhara replied that she never thought hard or unkindly of any one during all the years of suspicion and slighting that she had passed through; her only anxiety and trouble having been for the young prince, her son.

She then lifted her sleeve to her face and wept abundantly.

Kyodomi, on witnessing the flow of tears, said :  
“It is but reasonable that people should weep when they deeply regret anything, but your tears are those of joy and show out even more clearly your sincerity and purity. Be glad that such a happiness has come.”

With these and similar words of kindness Kyodomi cheered the heart and wiped away the tears of Yasodhara.

Yasodhara was sincerely glad that the past long years of dark suspicion and cold treatment had come to an end. She was also glad that Prince Siddartha had obtained the object he left her to find and that he had become a Tathegata, a Nyorai, a Buddha — one who had obtained conversion and perfect enlightenment. She was much impressed with his teachings and his extraordinary or supernatural powers and concluded to become one of his disciples in order that her joy might be full.

She took a certain disciple of Buddha into her confidence and told him that, although as to form and appearance she was only a woman and so not qualified for discipleship, yet as to mind and spirit she was truly a man. She said that her hope for happiness would be only realized



if she could become one of Buddha's disciples and enter on the path of ascetic observances.

The disciple was deeply impressed with the spirit and desire of Yasodhara and repeated the conversation to Buddha, who said: "Yasodhara's desire is certainly reasonable. On a mountain that lies southeast from here, in Southern India, there is a plateau called by the name of the lotus flower. When I was in my causal state of existence I preached there concerning the lotus — contemplation — quiet of soul. At that time there came a woman by the name of Kui who expressed the desire to study the Three Treasures of the Lotus: Perfect Enlightenment, the First Blooming of the Lotus Flower's Joy, and the Mysterious Mind and Law Joy of the Lotus, and planted there three lotus plants. She also copied three hundred volumes of the sacred book of Lotus Perfect Enlightenment, which she offered to me in worship. As a reward for these meritorious deeds she received the title of King-of-heaven Buddha. At her next rebirth she was born as a lotus flower.

"At the time of my own next birth into this world she appeared before me and offered the lotus flower as an act of worship. That woman

Kui was no other than this woman Yasodhara. The distinctions of sex are but visionary. Let her become a disciple if she wishes to be one."

Thus Yasodhara, in her thirty-seventh year, became a disciple of Buddha and he began to explain to her the sacred books.

Yasodhara remained faithful to the path she had chosen, and keeping implicitly the five hundred commandments she attained to the rank of Bodhisatva — equal enlightenment — and established a house for other women disciples at the base of a well-known mountain. In a short time fifty other women joined their fortunes with her.

Yasodhara thus became the first female disciple of Buddha.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE BUDDHA ASCENDS TO HEAVEN.

**B**UDDHA, on one occasion, called together ten disciples, sixteen Arhats, and fifty-two Bodhisatvas, and said to them: "I must shortly preach the doctrine of the Law on the floor of Indra-in-heaven, and you must accompany me thither."

All were astonished at this golden saying of the Buddha and replied that in virtue of his supernatural powers there could be no doubt but that he would be able to ascend thither.

During a period of seven days, beginning with the first day of the fourth month, Buddha gave himself entirely to meditation and worship. Making a profound obeisance toward the southeast he uttered the words: "Unchangeable, absolute, mysterious, and perfect enlightenment, thou art the same, whether of the past or of the future." He then shook his staff in the air towards the heavens.

On the instant a golden-lined cloud, adorned with eight lotus flowers, formed in the clear sky

and came floating gently down. The Buddha, with the ten disciples, sixteen Arhats, and fifty-two Bodhisatvas mounted the cloud, which then began to ascend until it bore them to the desired heaven. Alighting from their chariot Buddha investigated the place and found three palaces of diversified colors. The eastern one was called the Palace of the Manifestation of the Good; the western one the Joy-revealing Palace; the southern one the Palace of the Manifestation of Science, Interest, and Profound Contemplation. Buddha entered the southern palace, which, he told his companions, belonged exclusively to him, and there worshiped for a brief period.

After this act of worship was completed his bodily form changed and he appeared in the glorious lineaments of perfect enlightenment and with the body of the gold genius king, that is, as the tutelar deity of the place.

In the meantime Indra,<sup>1</sup> in full dress and wearing his full-jeweled crown, came forth from the eastern palace followed by several thousands of immortal beings, all having the supernatural

<sup>1</sup> In the vedic poetry of India, Indra is a mighty ruler of the bright firmament. All his wonderful deeds are performed by him for the benefit of the good or pious people who worship him.— *Chambers' Encyclopædia*.

power of movement hither and thither at will. Together with his company of followers Indra bowed down and worshiped Buddha and said: "I am unspeakably grateful for this visit of my Lord Buddha. The honor done to me by this call, and by the permission to see the glorious form and features that cannot be gazed on even once in a billion cycles of time, is more than I am worthy of. My own virtues will be enhanced by it. It is one of the greatest of marvels that I am now allowed this privilege. I indeed tremble with fear and joy because of this visit from the Buddha who has attained to the mysterious and perfect enlightenment and to the possession of the absolute calm."

Buddha replied by saying that Indra's remarks were very reasonable, and that the reasons for the visit made were three. The first one was his purpose to inform Indra that fifty-six hundred and seventy millions of years in the future a certain Buddha, having accomplished his first great desire, would manifest himself, in order to save all the living things of that period. The second reason was his desire to present King Indra with a certain book of the sacred scriptures. The third reason was to do honor to the queen, who

was kept in a secret place in the palace, and who, when he (Buddha) was born into the world, was his mother. "I now wish," said the Buddha, "to see her."

Indra asked Buddha why he called that lady his mother, as she was even now but eighteen years of age.

Buddha replied: "The lady was the queen of King Jobon in her causal stage, and her name was Maya. At the time of my present incarnation, which was necessary to my purpose in order to teach and save all living things, I chose King Jobon for my father and Maya for my mother. Maya died at the time of my birth. I endeavored, by the use of my supernatural power, to comfort her, but, as is common in human life, her mind was so clouded with grief that I could not succeed and she wandered away into the cloud and darkness of the nether heaven. She has, however, undergone such austerities that enlightenment has come to her, her darkness has cleared up, and by the merit of her observances she has been born into this heaven and has become the queen of Indra. I have completed my studies and austerities and so have established relations of affinity with the Buddha's paradise. At my birth

the nourishment for the babe in the bosom of Maya was a fresh and full-flowing fountain. If you doubt whether the lady I ask for, the wife and queen of Indra, is not Maya, my mother, I pray you press the nipple of her breast and see if milk do not at once flow forth."

Indra had no doubt about the truth of the words spoken by Buddha; hence he at once reported them to his queen. To test the truth of the reported utterance the queen pressed her nipples and there immediately issued a nourishing stream, which made its way through a ninefold curtain and a sevenfold hanging made of spun silk and entered the Buddha's mouth. Such an extraordinary and supernatural wonder is beyond the power of language to express!

After this Buddha preached to the queen of the true wisdom, and she gladly received his instruction.

The queen, grateful for the instruction, took the living and blooming flower from her hair, and, asking the Buddha never to forget his promise to be her guide, that she might obtain relations of affinity with the Buddha's paradise, offered it to him and then prostrated herself and worshiped him.

This act of the queen of Indra is the reason why we, the followers of Buddha, offer flowers to him when we worship him and ascribe to him full, rounded-out perfection of virtue. MAN-TOKU EMMAN NYORAI are the words employed. If we recite the full prayer when we offer the flowers, the protection of heaven will be over us and we shall attain to the Buddha's paradise.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### BUDDHA'S RETURN FROM INDRA'S HEAVEN.

ON the return and during the descent of Buddha from the heaven of Indra he met with an enemy who sought his life. The son of a neighboring king, who was of an exceedingly haughty, arrogant, and ambitious nature, was envious and jealous of the fame of Prince Siddhartha, or Buddha, or Nyorai, as he was now called. This young man, becoming acquainted with a hermit who lived in a mountain near, and who was an expert in the use of magic, planned with him, and the assistance of sixteen demons and a hundred kinds of disbelievers, to murder Buddha on his way back to his father's capital. Demons of contagious diseases were also employed in this attempt on the life of the Enlightened One.

Buddha, being the possessor of six supernatural powers, of three lights, and who shines on all the three thousand worlds, knew intuitively of this attempt on his life and felt deep regret because



Defeat of Heretics and Demons.



of the companions he had with him who might suffer from the wicked efforts of his enemies.

The prospective attempt became known to Indra and he forthwith dispatched his attendants, the immortal youths who had supernatural power of flight, who hurled arrows, spears, and swords right and left among the demons and so drove them away and back to their places of abode. The disbelievers also were overpowered; but Buddha, being compassionate and merciful, did not add other punishment to their vanquished misery.

Returning in safety to the suburbs of his father's capital, he resumed his task of preaching concerning the way of conversion and the returning of kindnesses. Kyodomi and her attendants, Udai and his wife, and people of both high and low degree flocked to hear his words, and many of them received enlightenment and deliverance from the bonds of sin. All such were the recipients of joys that cannot be compared to anything on the earth or in the heavens.

An episode which occurred during the return of Buddha from Indra's heaven must not be omitted. After escaping from the attempts on his life by his enemy with his demons and heretics,

his companions, the Arhats, while passing the foot of a mountain discovered a golden-pillar monument which was fifty feet in height. They called the attention of Buddha to this unusual and wonderful object. On approaching it he said: "If we see such an object but once, we are forever removed thereby from the three paths of evil. If one erects such a monument, he will surely be reborn into the heavenly paradise."

Having said these words he shed many tears. Buddha's chief disciple, Kasho, hearing the words and seeing the tears, said to his companions: "Why is it that the Buddha worships this golden-pillar monument? Does he still desire the favors of this earthly life?"

Buddha overheard the remark and said: "Kasho may well have doubts in his mind concerning my desires. I wish you all to listen calmly and meditate quietly while I tell you of the reason for the erection of this golden-pillar monument.

"You know the name of this kingdom, and that its capital is a hundred miles from here. Three generations ago the king had an only son by his queen, whose name was Kōgō-bunin. The country was in a state of peace and was prospering greatly at the time. The king, however, had committed

a grave error while in his causal stage of existence, and as a consequence was in due time smitten with epilepsy. The tutelary deity, or ascetic, who resided on a distant mountain, was consulted as to the best method of curing the king's disease. The ascetic gave it as his opinion that the only medicine that could effect a cure was the gall taken from a living person who was of a mild disposition and who had never been angry or injured the feelings of any one by willfulness or unkindness since being born into the world. The king's ministers consulted with each other concerning this extraordinary prescription and ultimately arrived at the conclusion that the person who had never been angry or hurt the feelings of another since birth did not exist; hence they decided to banish the king from his realm and place the prince, his son, on the throne in his stead.

“When the queen heard of this resolution she was exceedingly distressed, but was powerless to change the decision of the ministers. She called the prince to her side and told him all she had heard and then asked him to go with her to the king and express their regrets at the prospective change.

“The prince comforted her, however, by saying that he would set out and find a person who was of mild disposition, who had never been angry, and who during the entire course of his life had never hurt the feelings or broken the heart of any one.

“This person was himself, for he opened his own breast, took out his living, palpitating gall, and gave it to one of his wise attendants to use it as medicine for his father. He then died.

“The king used the medicine and wholly recovered from the disease. When he learned of his son’s death and the cause of it, he ordered the construction and the erection of a thousand golden-pillar monuments and employed a thousand priests to chant the litanies for the dead before them. For this pious and meritorious deed all the living of his time received lasting benefits in the heavenly paradise.

“The queen, on her part, while lamenting the loss of her son, ordered the making of a thousand images of the goddess of mercy. She also required a thousand priests to chant litanies before them, after which she sent them to a thousand different countries. That queen, called at that time Kōgō-bunin, was Maya, my present mother:

and that young prince was myself. I therefore see in this golden-pillar monument my own self. One inch of good and one foot of bad I realized during that existence — for I did not at that time satisfy the desires of all living things. I shed tears by this monument as I recollect these things.

“I do not shed tears of regret only, for through the merits of this pillar monument and by the efficacy of faith and devotion one acquires the five kinds of knowledge and the possession of the five supermundane powers.

“The first of these five kinds of knowledge is that which gives understanding of all principles and so of success in all one undertakes.

“The second of the five is that which gives us understanding concerning the world of matter and of all that seems to exist, that they really are void of existence; and that the quality of the voidness of all things constitutes the absolute.

“The third kind of knowledge gives one to understand how to deliver all living things, whether one can make affinity with them or not, and is called the reality of absoluteness.

“The fourth kind of knowledge is that of the



perfect mirror wisdom or unhindered absolute-ness. It gives absolute clearness of the perception of causes and effects and their relations.

“The fifth kind of knowledge is the central one. Its relations are with the mysterious body and its laws. Through quiet, absorbed contemplation this knowledge gives deliverance and absoluteness.

“These five kinds of knowledge or wisdom must be acquired by all who aspire to perfect enlightenment and Buddhahood.

“The five supernatural or supermundane powers have their relations with the elements: fire, water, air, earth, space, and color. The result of the possession of these powers enables one to make heaven and earth one’s body; all laws one’s fruitful seed; all relations or affinities into efficient causes, and all labors into desired effects.

“There are also four kinds of Buddhas. One is the Buddha of the Law; another is the Buddha of the Reason; another is the Buddha of Reincarnations, while the other is the real, the true, the complete Buddha.

“By the merits of this golden-pillar monument and of austerities and of prayers one comes to understand all these things intuitively and com-

pletely, without any instruction or assistance from others."

When Buddha had finished his discourse the fifty-two Bodhisatvas, the sixteen Arhats, and the ten disciples expressed themselves as deeply impressed with all he had said and as being no longer surprised that the Buddha shed tears when he saw the golden-pillar monument.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### AN ENEMY.

**D**AIBA-DATLA, the enemy who sought by the use of demons and heretics to take the life of Buddha as he returned from the heaven of Indra to his home, though disappointed for the time being, did not give up the hope of some time accomplishing his purpose. His father was king of a realm adjoining that of King Jobon, Buddha's father, and the two kings were brothers. Daiba determined on the use of strategy to break up the friendly relations that existed between the brothers and their kingdoms in order to ward off the teaching of his cousin Siddhartha, the Buddha, and so injure him by frustrating his intention of propagating his teaching in other realms than that of his own father.

Datla appeared before his father, King Kokubon, on a certain occasion, and said to him : " I hear it commonly reported that my uncle, King Jobon, has had a called meeting of his courtiers and high officials at his palace and has expressed to them

strange opinions about yourself and your realm. He is reported to have said that it frequently happens that parents and children, brothers and sisters, who ought to be at one with each other, are frequently so differently constituted that they often quarrel with each other, while those who have no blood relationship are as frequently extremely intimate. 'There are four brothers of us,' King Jobon said, 'yet we are all different. King Kokubon, however, is more foolish than the other brothers, and he governs his country in a most willful and severe manner. His family and his ministers are afraid of him, and he has no intimate friends. His only son also is self-willed and wicked, and takes delight in cruel treatment of others and in killing all living things. If any of the king's subjects complain of harsh or cruel treatment, they are severely punished. The natural consequence is that the country is being disintegrated and is fast going to ruin. The saying of the ancients that the way of goodness is hard to learn, and the way of wickedness is easy, is absolutely true. I speak this to you all that you may take warning so that my kingdom may not fall into the evil condition that prevails in the realm of my brother, King Kokubon.'"

Prince Datla continuing said to his father: "You know that I never tell you anything but the truth. Now it is in the way I have told you that King Jobon, his courtiers and officials speak about you and your kingdom. Furthermore, Siddartha, his son, has been studying the arts of the genii and has lately returned to his father's capital. He has changed his name to that of Shaka — Nyorai — Buddha, shaved his head, and taken to preaching to all classes the doctrines of the ascetics. The son of King Kaurobon, my cousin, has become a disciple, shaved his head, and changed his name. The son of King Akurobon has also shaved his head, changed his dress and his name, and become a follower. Besides these many others of high rank have been converted and become disciples. Even retainers and servants, without asking consent of their lords and masters, have shaved their heads, changed their names and dress, and become followers. During the summer of this year I was urgently advised to do the same thing. I replied, however, that I did not consider myself old enough to do anything of the sort. I also said that I thought that those who would thus forsake their masters and their parents as easily as they cut the hair from

their heads, for such a purpose, must be crazy, and the destroyers of their country. These sayings of mine were reported to my two cousins, who reported them to King Jobon.

“As for myself, I should like to break off all relationship and intercourse with my uncle King Jobon and his family. I do not care to be converted and live an idle, useless life.”

King Kokubon, Prince Datla's father, replying said: “There are no parents among either those of high degree or of low who are not hampered, fettered, and bound by their children; yet all you say is reasonable enough. Maya, the mother of Siddartha, was an extraordinarily beautiful woman, but she was bewitched of a devil when she conceived and gave him birth. At the time of Siddartha's birth many remarkable things took place. As he grew up to manhood his father King Jobon took the greatest of interest and care about him; yet instead of being pleased, grateful, and satisfied with what had been done for him he ran away from the palace in order to gratify his own fancies. I was certainly very glad to hear that he had returned and that he had studied many sciences. If the sciences and doctrines he studied and now teaches are such as are

injurious to the best interests of the realm, do not listen to him for a single moment or become a convert to his teachings.

“I desire also that you issue an order to the same effect for promulgation among the people of my realm. There is nothing more formidable or difficult to deal with in a country than heretics. By their ceaseless activity they confuse the minds of the people and end by making them believe that good is evil and that evil is good.

“Set a watch also on yourself, and pay no heed to what either King Jobon or his son Siddartha may say to you, no matter whether what they say be good or bad. If a son through disobedience lose the kingdom left to him by his father, the very heavens will be angry and will punish him. Take heed, therefore, to my words!”

In his scheme of breaking off all relationship and communication between the two kingdoms of these two kings, Prince Datla, Siddartha's enemy and cousin, succeeded through the use of his wicked cunning.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### PRINCE SIDDARTHA INVITED TO ASCEND THE THRONE.

THE cabinet ministers of King Jobon, after mutual conference, waited on their royal master on one occasion and addressed him as follows :—

“The return of Prince Siddartha as a Tathegata, or exalted Buddha, appears to our rejoicing eyes as the blooming after a thousand years of waiting of that wondrous flower in the sea. The people of the realm rejoice with us : so also do the people of the adjoining realms. If now your majesty will elevate the prince to the throne, that he may reign in your stead, the whole nation will rejoice and prosper yet more and more. Since Prince Siddartha would be the real king, as well as exalted Buddha, peace would pervade this and all the thousand and ten thousand adjacent countries, so that nothing in the past history of this or of those countries would be able to compare with it.”



The king in replying said: "I heartily agree with all that you have said. Your expressed wish is the one and strongest desire of my heart. Go at once from the palace to the residence of the prince and inform him of my wishes."

King Jobon's ministers were delighted with the success of their interview; hence they set out very gladly to the residence of Prince Siddartha. An audience being granted them by the prince they said:—

"While you were absent from the palace and the country, the king, his ministers, and all the people, high and low alike, went astray because of the gloom and darkness of sorrow incident to the loss of the heir to the throne. Even the sun and the moon during those years of absence shone less brightly than before. Now that you have returned, having completed your studies and austerities, we all, king, courtiers, and people, alike rejoice as though we had been permitted to see that wondrous flower that blooms in the sea but once in a thousand years. Having through study and the performance of many austerities accomplished the object of your desires, we humbly and earnestly request that you will now ascend the throne in the place of King Jobon your father

and reign over us and all the land. We believe that you who are now a real and true Buddha would also be a real and a true king, and that you would govern the realm justly and peacefully. The land also would prosper and your reign would last for thousands of years. This is our profound and earnest request and you will confer lasting blessings on the king your father, on us his ministers, and on all his people by graciously hearkening to our request and by ascending the throne.”

Prince Siddartha answered that he appreciated the reasonableness of all the ministers had said, and that as their desire was also the expressed wish of the king, obedience to that wish would be but the fulfilling of a proper filial duty; yet since he had other objects in life than those proposed to him, and his purpose to carry out those objects had long ago been fixed in his heart, he regretted that he must decline the invitation. The prince also informed the ministers that while he was performing his austerities on the distant mountain his purpose and his heart became thus fixed. “I knew long ago,” he said, “that this request would come to me, but as I wish to make affinity with vastly different things, I am

not now able to consent to become king. I will, however, explain the matter more fully in the course of a sermon that I shall shortly deliver.”

Prince Siddartha requested the ministers to announce to the court that he would deliver a discourse at a certain time for the particular benefit of the two princes, his younger brothers.

When the time arrived, the King with the two princes and all his courtiers and the ladies of the court in great numbers assembled in the hall set apart for the assembly. Buddha, taking the two princes by the hand, sat down on the raised seat provided for him. Ten disciples and sixteen Arhats sat on his left hand and the same number on his right. His discourse ran as follows:—

“One of old has said of persons that where one has wisdom, but no heart or affection, he is called a clever person or a person of superior talent and ability. When, however, one is possessed of both wisdom and heart he is called a person of most superior excellence. When any one is destitute of both heart and wisdom he is called a foolish person or an idiot. Besides these three classes of people there are those who through physical or other ailments have to be constantly watched and cared for and who cannot

be made other than they are by the exercise of even the greatest benevolence.

“These two youths belong to the third class I have named, since they as yet possess neither heart nor knowledge. I will impart to them that which will be to them as a thousand hearings and once seeing.”

At this stage of the discourse Buddha took a flower which he separated into halves. One half he placed on the head of one prince and the other half on the head of the other. He then pronounced a magical formula, flourished his staff in the air, and immediately the princes, himself, the Arhats, and the disciples became invisible.

Having ascended into the upper world, Buddha informed his companions that there were three mysterious worlds that he wished them to see, to examine, and to consider with such care that they would never after forget or regret what they had seen and learned.

“The first of these mysterious lands,” said the Buddha, “is the one of transformations; the second is that of conversion and the acquisition of mysterious wisdom; the third is the land of law-body and of law-quality. The first, or land of transformation, is the land of pain and painful con-

ditions. In it there are eight hells of flaming fires and eight of biting cold. A vast variety of devils and other tormentors in all manner of forms — brute, reptilian, and human — also abide there. These demons are ever engaged in writing the crimes of those who come into these hells, on mirrors, and dragging the poor sinners before Yemma the awful judge. They then deliver the condemned over to other tormentors who torture them day and night at their pleasure. The dreadfulness of the cries of the condemning judge, the tormenting devils, and the tortured sinners is too awful for utterance. One's body with its six senses<sup>1</sup> trembles with horror and dread as we listen! The Bodhisatvas are ever making their utmost endeavors to save the tormented by taking the place of the sufferers and receiving the torment in their stead.

“In the second land there is abounding joy. Heavenly beings are passing to and fro and hither and thither, and while doing so they make the sweetest music that ever gladdened the ear.

“In the third land there are other and more

<sup>1</sup> The six senses are the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the heart, and they are called in Japanese the *rokkon*.

exalted beings such as the Tathagata or exalted Buddhas, the Bodhisatvas or those whose next birth will make them Buddhas. These and others of approximating attainments and rank manifest themselves in this place, and by virtue of their supernatural powers pass to and fro in the golden light from pedestal to pedestal or height to height. Joys and pleasures beyond all power of expression pervade and fill the place."

As the Buddha showed the two princes the hells and the paradises and unfolded their meaning, the doubts the youths had entertained began to clear away and a heart of faith began to spring up. They expressed their gratitude to their teacher for his great kindness in thus showing and teaching them the value of merit, of the distinction between good and evil, wisdom and folly. Their eyes being opened they at once entered on the path—the new way of truth.

Buddha, perceiving their condition, exhorted them to cherish the wisdom they had acquired, and never to neglect the duty of confession, although it and all things were void.

He then pronounced another magical formula, flourished his staff in the air, and behold, he and the two princes, the disciples, and the Arhats were

again in their places in the midst of the royal assembly where the discourse began !

Prior to the delivery of this discourse to the young princes, Buddha had on several occasions preached to the king, his aunt Kyodomi, one thousand two hundred and fifty Arhats, and others. His discourses had been of conversion, of the duty of patient, persistent, quiet contemplation, of austerities, and of the duty of returning the kindnesses of parents.

The king, Kyodomi, and others had obtained through these discourses the several merits and powers of conversion, of the perfect law of entire absoluteness ; also, the qualification of becoming non-existent. The acquisition of these made them equal to the most exalted of the Bodhisatvas.

## CHAPTER XX.

### INAUGURAL ADDRESSES AT THE PALACE.

B UDDHA requested one of his disciples to deliver an address to the court on the subject of the three mysterious realms that he had so recently visited. The disciple consented to do so provided that the two princes who had been members of that exploring party would act as his witnesses and guaranties. The discourse then delivered was as powerful as though Buddha himself had delivered it. The younger prince became a convert, and took on himself the vow to keep the five hundred commandments. He also changed his name and took his seat among the Arhats.

The elder prince also accepted the teaching of the Buddha.

Siddartha, on seeing the faith that was growing within the youth, and believing it to be the foundation and the beginning of genuine prosperity to the realm, said to him: "Although your conversion is a thing I have long desired, we must regard



this matter with great care, for there is such a thing as false conversion. The true conversion results from carefully hearing, clearly seeing, and accurately knowing. Without these three things the end, true conversion, cannot be obtained."

The Buddha, ascending to the high seat provided for him, now delivered an address concerning parents and children. The substance of the discourse was as follows:—

"We are subject to four births, so far as our human life is concerned. The first is our prenatal one when we are constituent parts of the physical frame of our parents, heaven then being to us as father and the earth as mother. The second is our human nativity—our birth out into the visible world. We may receive with this birth the seven virtues; namely, causal virtue, effectual virtue, the ability-to-make-affinities virtue, the virtue of ability to continue all the virtues, and the virtue of knowing all the laws of cause and effect.

"This natural birth is the occasion of the greatest suffering to the one who bears a child. Her suffering can be comparable only to that of enduring the eight extreme heats and the eight extreme colds of the sixteen hells. The child also is afflicted and distressed. It is thus and here

that disagreements between parents and children begin, and where disobedience has its origin. It is necessary for all to remember what their parents have suffered for them and to be careful to repay that suffering and kindness.

“The third birth is the one in which we are born into and among the homes of all the living. In this case our country is as our father, and all the living as our mother. Five cardinal virtues are connected with this birth and life; namely, kindness, justice, etiquette, intelligence, faithfulness to promises.

“The fourth birth is the one by means of which we are ushered into the land of absolute cleanness — paradise, the heavens being as our father and the sacred laws as our mother. This birth is the most important of the four, as it is the one of absoluteness, of quietness, and of holiness.

“Five kinds of wisdom are connected with this birth; namely, the wisdom or ability to use supernatural power; the ability of profound contemplation and the reception of unhindered light; the ability to make affinity with all laws; the ability to acquire perfect mirror-like intelligence; the ability to understand all laws, their relations

and qualities. These excellences can be obtained only by those possessed of perfect intelligence acquired through meritorious activities and austerities.

“As to the relations of sex in this matter, women are from one life to another women and mothers, while men continue to be men and fathers. All therefore are fathers and mothers and offspring, and so have received mutual favors. Those who do not recognize this and seek to return parental favors to their parents are as brutes, as demons, as stocks of wood or of stone.

“There are also four kinds of children. The first is the child of desire—the desired one. The parents of such an one having broken no one of the sacred laws in their causal stage, but who have amassed great merit by their good deeds, receive for their desired offspring a Bodhisatva. This Bodhisatva, having already affinity or near relationship with the three precious things, and having amassed great merit while seeking the way of deliverance, will ultimately reach up to the summit of blessedness and take his parents with him.

“The second kind of child is the one who comes full of reverence towards those who give

him (or her) birth. He will be obedient to his parents, make the home and the family happy and prosperous, and become a worthy example for other children to follow.

“The third kind of child is the one whose birth will ever be regretted by those who brought it into existence. This child, having broken the commandments in its causal stage, is born weak and sickly and is miserable both day and night. The parents grieve over his condition, spend their strength and their means for his recovery, but grow poorer and poorer, and so shorten their lives by their sorrow and care.

“The fourth kind of child is one of the robber cycles. This child from the time of his birth is disobedient and wicked to his parents and mocks at his teachers. The older he grows the more wicked he becomes. He will always hate the good and love the evil. His earthly end will be to be publicly executed, and his parents with him and his body exposed on the outer walls of the city for a warning to others.

“The way of conversion consists, first, in the recognition of the kindness of parents and in the endeavor to repay them.

“It consists, in the second place, in improving

the condition of one's country, in general benevolence and helping the poor, in the building of edifices for the storing of holy relics, in being mild and generous, and in thus amassing merits which will count for use afterward.

“The way of conversion consists, in the third place, in saving, that is, in teaching and guiding, those living things who have as yet no affinity with paradise and no unchangeable mind of absoluteness. This will result in the amassing of great merit which will be available to those delivered through cycles on cycles of years; for the one who delivers will give all the personally amassed merits for those he has delivered and will keep none for himself. Many will thus obtain perfect enlightenment and affinity with a Buddha, while he who delivers them will secure for himself unsurpassing gain.”

Turning at this point and addressing the young prince who was to ascend the throne in his stead, Prince Siddartha the Buddha said:—

“I entreat of you that you ever keep these teachings in your mind. One who hears and then forgets such instruction is a fool, and wicked as well. I have shown to you the three mysterious realms. You are now to sit on a throne and

reign as a king. Be diligent in returning the kindnesses and favors you have received from your parents. Govern the land quietly and peaceably. If you do so, the whole country will prosper and the wealth of the people will increase. The heavens also will be your protector, and your father's heart will be full of joy and through your good deeds he will obtain merit and the rank of a heavenly king.

“As for myself, I shall devote myself diligently to the work of delivering and of satisfying the deepest desires of all living things who are ignorantly wandering outside of the law-world of paradise. This is my sole object and purpose in life.”

The king, his courtiers, and all others were deeply impressed with the Buddha's discourse. The king came forth from behind the curtain where he had been seated, and worshipping Buddha publicly expressed his thanks for what he had heard. He said:—

“Through your kindness I now understand the mutual relations of parents and children, the four kinds of birth, the four kinds of children, and the duty of children to return in kind the kindnesses of their parents. You certainly have re-

turned the kindnesses shown to yourself by thus instructing me. I am extremely grateful and I am happy also to know that I too may become a perfectly enlightened one — a Buddha.”

When the king ceased speaking and doing reverence to the Buddha, the courtiers in their turn advanced, worshiped, and expressed their thanks.

After this Kyodomi came out from behind the hanging screen that separated the women from the men in the assembly hall, and grasping the sleeve of Buddha said to him:—

“I am exceedingly grateful for the discourse you have given us to-day and I am especially pleased to learn that all women are women and mothers from life to life. I have had the care of you from the time of your birth; hence I trust that I shall be saved by the merits of that work, relation, and affinity. I earnestly desire that through this relationship I may attain to the happiness of the land of the Buddha — the highest paradise.”

The court ladies next came before Buddha and worshiping him expressed their gratitude for the instruction he had given them and for the hope he had awakened within them that through his

merit and benevolence not even one living thing would be left unsaved.

The state of mind induced by the discourse in all the hearers made the assembly appear as though the paradisiacal land had been literally transplanted to that spot.

Some days after this Buddha called his disciples and the Arhats and said to them that he had experienced very much happiness since he came to his father's capital. He then mentioned the delight of the opportunity to worship at the tomb of Maya his mother; the visit made to three mysterious lands where they had met Indra; the preaching in the palace; the accession to the throne of the young prince his brother; the conversion of the king; the forming of affinity with Kyodomi so that she could attain to the land of the Buddhas; also, the conversion and deliverance of the courtiers and of the people of both high and low degree. "There is nothing in this wide world," he said, "which can give happiness like this."

Having finished these expressions of satisfaction over the result of his return, he informed the disciples and the Arhats that he would shortly make a ceremonial visit to the king's palace.



This was reported to Buddha's old chamberlain Udai, who in turn reported it to the king. The king expressed great pleasure at the promised visit, and at once issued orders that the highest officials in the realm should meet in a certain place and await the coming of the Buddha; that the second grade of officials should go out on the highway to meet him; and that the third grade should act as guards along the road.

When the Buddha set out on his visit he was accompanied by twelve hundred Arhats, six hundred of whom went before and six hundred behind. The official guard surrounded the entire party. Thus escorted and protected neither heretic nor demon could approach him to do him harm.

The king, with the young prince, came out to meet the Buddha, and expressed their thanks for both the visit of the present and the preaching of the past.

At this point a messenger from Kyodomi came to the king to say that as an expression of her gratitude to the Buddha for his preaching of the other day she wished to present to him a priestly garment, and asking his opinion of the propriety of doing so.

The king said to the messenger that he thought

the idea a good one, but that he had heard that the Buddha does not wear now even what was called the pure garment, hence he doubted whether the gift would be really acceptable.

Buddha, overhearing the conversation between the messenger and the king, said: "The garment I wore while I was doing the austerities of the way on the distant mountain is one that is worn only under those circumstances, and the one who wears it, and while he wears it, has no personal liberty in anything. He cannot even sit as he pleases. I divested myself of that garment when I completed my austerities, and if I should wear it now, it would be an impure garment. The garment that Kyodomi proposes to give me is one of great merits and can be worn when making offerings to the precious things,<sup>1</sup> and I wish to receive it."

Kyodomi was greatly rejoiced at the message brought by her page, and at once went to the palace and presented to the Buddha the priestly garment made of gold brocade with a shoulder sash of rare material and workmanship to match.

<sup>1</sup>The three precious things of Buddhism are Buddha, the law, and the assembly of priests. A common formula used by one when initiated into Buddhism is this: "I take my refuge in Buddha, in Dharma, and in Samgha." Buddha is the person, Dharma is the law, Samgha is the assembly of priests.

Buddha expressed great joy over the gift and said that the merit acquired by its bestower was indescribably great, and the inner relations and affinities were of the most occult and mysterious nature.

The court ladies afterwards presented to each of the Arhats similar priestly garments.

The Arhats were profuse in their expressions of satisfaction over the gifts. One of them said that it was as lovely as seeing the moon reflected in a lake of water, and as unexpected as the sudden bursting out of a bright cloud from the bosom of a rugged cliff.

The ceremony of giving and of receiving finished, the Buddha and the Arhats put on the garments, worshiped, and then returned home.

This is the origin of the custom of wearing this kind of a garment by the Buddhist priests.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE PLOT OF DAIBA-DATLA AND BUDDHA'S COUNTERPLOT.

A SHORT time after the events recorded in the former chapter the Buddha announced to his disciples and the Arhats that he would give a general public address for the benefit of all the living who had as yet made no affinity with the better things — that is, for those who had not yet been converted to Buddhism.

His cousin and enemy Daiba-Datla, who had been already thwarted in the attempt he had made to take the life of Buddha, rejoiced to hear of this public preaching for the masses, for he thought it would be a good opportunity for retrieving his former defeat. He immediately called together several thousands of heretics and demons and consulted with them as to the best method of killing their common enemy.

One heretic suggested that as the Buddha intended to travel through various countries preaching to all the living it would be easy to kill him anywhere.

Another suggested that five hundred heretics disguise themselves in a dress like the one worn by the Arhats, make a disturbance in the great audience, and then during the confusion kill the Buddha.<sup>1</sup>

Another heretic suggested that five hundred of the demons disguise themselves as ordinary people, pretend to be converted, and make their way before the Arhats to the Buddha, cause a disturbance, and then carry out their object.

Daiba-Datla approved of the suggestions, and said that he himself would go to the public preaching with five hundred demons, and then, no matter what the preaching might be about, he would create a disturbance and carry out his plan. If any should resist, he said he would fight it out then and there; and besides, if it were necessary to the completion of his fixed determination to kill the Buddha, he would create disturbance and revolt throughout the whole of India.

While he said this he looked as fierce and as frightful as an angry demon.

<sup>1</sup> It is rather strange that a method similar to this has often been adopted by the Buddhist priests of Japan to break up the preaching services of the Christians.



Daiba-Datla Sets Out on His Wicked Errand.



The Buddha, by reason of his supernatural power, became at once aware of Daiba-Datla's plans and purpose; hence he had no fear. He continued to give himself exclusively to the conversion of all living things.

He decided, however, to make efficient preparation for the thwarting of the plot of his enemy. He called together the Arhats, and told them that those who travel about from country to country, as he and they were intending to do, were liable to meet with a variety of experiences, some of them good and some of them bad; hence it was desirable that certain fixed rules should be observed during their travels and at their public assemblies.

The Buddha called before him four of the oldest of the Arhats and requested them to carefully examine the entire body of Arhats, and separate them into as many ranks or divisions for the greater convenience during travel and when in great assemblies, and for the more efficient performance of their austerities and other religious duties.

This was done, and the four divisions were each allotted six continuous hours for the silent, abstract contemplation, austerities, and sufficient



time for the acquisition of wisdom, collecting alms, keeping the commandments, and other religious duties. This plan always left one of the four divisions on guard, since each division was allotted six hours for the quiet-sitting, abstract contemplation austerities.

When the public preaching took place this form of discipline was still observed by the Arhats. The heretics made their appearance disguised according to the prearranged plan, but they were baffled by the new arrangements and were not able to accomplish anything. The demons also came before the Buddha during the meeting, and expressed their strong desire to be converted. Buddha at once ordered Kasho, the chief of the Arhats, to induct the would-be converts into the observance of the priestly and ascetic austerities. The prospect of having to observe these for six consecutive hours every day, under the watchful eye of the leader of a division and of the entire company, so horrified the demons that they at once took flight and left the assembly.

It was thus through the supernatural knowledge of the Buddha, and because of his great benevolence, that this wicked plot against his life was broken up in this way.

The heretics, on their return, crestfallen, to Daiba-Datla, gave as the reason of their failure the constant fasting, the sleepless vigils, and the incessant watchfulness of the Arhats. For said the heretics, "The Arhats are never careless for a single moment. They pick flowers to pieces, recite their scriptures, and do their silent, abstract contemplation six times both night and day; they do not stretch their legs for one instant while sitting and contemplating, nor do they move their feet while reciting their scriptures and while worshipping the Buddha. If also one does not observe the ceremonies and perform the austerities exactly as they ought to be done, instant examination is made. Because of this vigilance we were unable to mix with the body of Arhats and carry out our plans."

Daiba-Datla, on hearing this report, said that he would not make any further attempts to harm the Buddha or the Arhats; but that he would instead create disturbances in the countries they intended to visit and in which they intended to teach their doctrines. In order to accomplish this he dispatched the heretics to the adjacent countries, that they might make in advance an evil report of the bad results that followed from the

listening to and the acceptance of the teachings of Buddha and the Arhats.

Daiba-Datla himself had the art of changing himself at will into a wind or a flame or a child or a woman. He could become invisible while others were observing him, and could transport himself hither and thither at pleasure. By the use of this wonderful art he visited several courts, made the acquaintance of kings, and filled their minds with his own wicked ideas. He not only gave an evil report of the Buddha who was intending to visit the particular realm he was in, but he introduced such wicked ideas of his own that the usual relations of parents and children, brothers and sisters, sovereign and subjects were demoralized.

Daiba-Datla first made a convert of the son of King Bimbasara, whom he induced to imprison his father in a sevenfold dungeon. The queen, his mother, sorry at the indignity put on the king, expressed her disapprobation of the unfilial act. Through Daiba-Datla's advice the young man charged the queen, his mother, with the crime of rebellion and then imprisoned her too.

Daiba-Datla induced the son of another king to

banish his father to a distant island and seize the throne for himself.

He also did other similar wickednesses and created disturbances wherever he went. Yet he told the people everywhere, and those in authority, that the doctrines that the Buddha was proposing to preach in their particular countries were full of evil, disturbing, and destroying things; and he urged them to slay without mercy the teachers of those doctrines.

The Buddha, on hearing of the teachings, disturbances, and injuries done by Daiba-Datla, said to his followers that when he was in his causal stage of existence he had the strong desire to gratify the longing for deliverance of all living things: hence he manifested himself to the world in various forms of Buddhahood. On one occasion he revealed himself as a Buddha of superior supernatural wisdom in order to pacify the four kinds of demons. On another occasion he manifested himself as a Pure-light Buddha and shone out his rays into the deepest and darkest recesses where living things were to be found, and calmed the mind and conscience of both the good and the bad. On yet other occasions he manifested himself as the Lamp-light Buddha, as the Burning-

light Buddha, as the Twelve-light Buddha, as the Ten-thousand-light Buddha, as the Sun-Buddha, as the most superior Buddha, and now and then as a Bodhisatva. It was thus, he said, that he had amassed merits sufficient to enable him, with the aid of religious austerities, to save all living things.

“And if,” he continued, “all the flesh and bones that I have used and thrown away for the sake of all living things were gathered together in one place, they would make a heap higher than yon mountain! Added to the merits amassed in former states of existence I have the merits of the ascetic austerities performed on the snow mountains. This mass of merits will not be without use to me now.”

Having said these words he shook his staff in the air, pronounced a magical formula, and immediately the light from the mysterious and joyous paradise of the Buddhas shone radiantly forth, and the most perfect of flowers fell around in showers. The Buddhas resident in their paradise also manifested themselves and said: “The merits of Nyorai’s — Buddha’s — preaching and guiding of all the living are not in vain, and the wish of all will soon be satisfied. There is no error in this

statement, for rather than say that which is not true we Buddhas would cut off our own tongues."

This voice and saying of the Buddhas were heard in all the ten directions of the universe, also in the four heavens, the eight heavens, and the sixteen heavens. The Buddhas also said that no disturbance should be made or allowed in any place or country where Nyorai — Buddha — should go to preach and to guide; and that no harm should befall him, as the heavens would protect him, and all attempts of his enemies to do him harm would be as ineffectual as the attempts of cold to produce a frost in the presence of the bright and shining sun.

These illustrious beings, the Buddhas, appeared each on their respective pedestals or heights in their paradise, and Nyorai in their presence firmly promised to teach, guide, and save all living things.

As Buddha went forth to this benevolent work he found no difficulty in putting down any and all attempts at disturbance and harm. He also preached the way of deliverance to all living things in all the countries round about, notwithstanding the efforts Daiba-Datla had made to thwart and injure him.

The wicked plot of the enemy having been defeated the heretics and their adherents fled away, and Daiba-Datla returned to his own country disappointed and disheartened.

After this experience Nyorai preached his doctrines during a period of forty-nine years. The books containing these discourses are called respectively the Kegon, the Agon, the Hōdō, the Haunya, the Hokke, and the Nehan, or Nirvana. The sermons composing these books were preached at different times, at different places, and to different audiences. Some of them were delivered before King Jobon, Kyodomi, and the court, as well as before the Arhats; while others were preached in the heavenly paradise, to the Bodhisatvas, to the ordinary Buddhas, and to the most perfected of them all, the Tathegatas, and even to the demons.

The last discourses of Nyorai are recorded in and make the work called the Nehankyo or Nirvana book. They were preached in the presence of eight hundred myriads and more of priests by the banks of the river that flows near Kapilavastu, the capital of King Jobon.

Nyorai emphasized the fact in all his teaching that the properties, qualifications, and possibilities

of Buddhahood are inherent in all living things; and he constantly urged the importance of all who have life of availing themselves of this the highest way of deliverance from the misery of existence.

Daiba-Datla, Nyorai's great enemy, and many unbelievers, together with those who might even be said to be destitute of any higher nature at all, became believers and ultimately attained to perfect enlightenment.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE LAST TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA.

WHEN the Buddha was seventy-seven years of age he called into his presence two thousand three hundred Arhats and gave them instruction concerning the methods to be observed by them in performing their austerities. He also required the practice by them of the new methods in his presence. The Buddha next ascended to a high dais and discoursed to the Arhats, with a flower in his hand for a text, concerning abstract meditation, kinds of preaching, the law of absolute rest, and the real features or conditions of extinction of existence.

At the close of the address the Arhats prostrated themselves and worshiped him, after which they performed the austerities of the Zazen, which are performed by sitting in an immovable position, with the legs and feet under the body, and giving attention exclusively to abstract meditation.

Kasho, the chief Arhat, of all the company was the only one who remained standing. After-

wards he folded up the mat on which he usually sat and went out to the room of a priest in the temple where all were stopping. The Buddha called to him after he had taken his seat in the priest's room, but Kasho did not respond any farther than to rise from his seat, go out on the veranda, and then, in the standing posture, gaze attentively up into the sky.

The Buddha again called to Kasho, who this time responded. The Buddha then gave him the flower which had been the text of the discourse and said to him that through his accumulation of merits he would obtain perfect enlightenment through the power of various transformations or reincarnations.

It was because of this saying of the Buddha that Kasho came to be spoken of by his fellow Arhats as the one who should attain to Buddhahood after extinction.

Among the many disciples of Buddha seven came to be spoken of as the wise disciples. One was celebrated for his wisdom; another for his ability to remember all the teachings that Buddha had imparted; another for his supermundane powers; another for his remarkable preaching ability; another for the firmness of his faith; another

for his attachment to and use of priestly garments, and another for his great logical acumen.

The other disciples, who numbered over two thousand three hundred, began, observed, and finished their devotions and austerities under the supervision of these seven wise ones.

On one occasion the Buddha called these seven before him and instructed them to be unfailingly diligent in their work of saving all living things and in the care of retreats for the sick and the aged. He also instructed them in the origin of his preaching and of the particular place where preaching even after his death should be constantly done, and where the austerities of the ascetics should be performed.

Concerning the place for future preaching the Buddha said that it was where he began to preach after obtaining perfect enlightenment and understanding of all causes and effects on the distant mountains.

The reigning prince of that region of country, after hearing some of Buddha's instruction, built a temple or preaching place for him in a royal and immense garden, and preaching was carried on there for seven full years. "It was thus," the Buddha said to his disciples, "that I was able to

satisfy the desires I had entertained while in my causal stage,<sup>1</sup> and to reach out to deliver all living things.

“That being the place where I began to preach, and that the origin of the temple or preaching place and hospitals in a large garden, it is my desire that preaching be continued there after my death, and forever after. There also the austerities must be faithfully observed.

“The origin of this place being of such a sacred nature, all who visit it in order to hear the preaching will be delivered from the five kinds of impediments to their progress; namely, the laws of causes and effects,<sup>2</sup> the lusts of the flesh, the three poisons of darkness, foolish ideas, and negligence. If any desire to build a similar hall or temple, they must understand that it is a work of their causal stage, and not of effect.

“Although one may be destitute of wisdom

<sup>1</sup> The term “causal stage” seems to indicate the existence in the past life or lives, or of the present life, of a positive and conscious effort through austeric endeavor to reach toward a higher stage of being. Buddhahood would seem to be not a causal but a resultant stage.

<sup>2</sup> In Buddhism the terms “cause and effect” relate solely to the relations of the conduct of one existence or incarnation on the kind of existence or stage of being that will be entered on after another incarnation. A certain kind of life and conduct will result in a certain effect or state or stage of being in the succeeding rebirth. The term is thus very narrow in its use and application. It has nothing whatever to do with a Creator and the laws he has established. This is cause and effect without a God and has to do only with conduct and character.

and of meritorious works, yet such an one may become a Bodhisatva possessing four wisdoms. These four wisdoms are the wonderful law-wisdom, wonderful manifestation-wisdom, wonderful affinity-wisdom, and wonderful illuminating, favor-returning wisdom. If any one should build a tower or temple at any place whatever, no matter whether it was but an inch in size, he can become such a Bodhisatva. This method of obtaining merit and high effects stands at the head of all other endeavors."

Having given this instruction concerning the beginning of his preaching, the origin of preaching halls or temples, and the merit to be obtained by visiting the original hall and by erecting others like it, no matter how small they might be, the Buddha proceeded to instruct the seven wise disciples on the origin and use of a wooden effigy of himself, and of the utensils to be used in the temple services.

"The utensils," the Buddha said, "must be an altar, a brass mace, a bell, a vase, a fire bowl, a pair of cymbals, and a censer. The use of these articles results to the user in the benefit of the merits of the five Buddhas who have already appeared in the world, and the austerities of the

Buddha who is yet to appear. The use of the wooden image or idol would perfect both Arhats and Bodhisatvas: hence it must be set up and worshiped."

Concerning this image the Buddha said that one had been made like himself of heroic dimensions by a celebrated person.

"The features of this image," he continued, "represent me at the time I was discoursing on the theme of the acquisition of mysterious enlightenment and of absolute quietness of soul. The maker of the image brought it into my presence and with it expressed his appreciation of the way I had taught him, and his gratitude. I then in return expressed my thanks to the engraver and giver and at the same time uttered my respects to the image [worshiped it]. I then had it carried before me to the temple and placed in the position where it now is. Since it represents by its features the condition of one who has acquired perfect enlightenment and absolute repose, let all the people worship it."

Kasho and others of the seven wise disciples were somewhat surprised at this teaching and said: "We are confident that the Buddha is not indulging in a bit of humor, yet we do not under-

stand why one who is a real and true Buddha like yourself should worship an unclean wooden image. The face and features of the true Buddha who has obtained perfect enlightenment and absolute repose are as full and as clear as the heavens; hence needs no wooden image or other representation to produce an effect on the mind of any. Are the three prostrations and acts of worship paid to the idol a means to any particular end?"

The Buddha in reply said that their surprise and question were quite reasonable. "I do not," he said, "pay my respects to and worship the image as such. I pay my respects to and worship the precious merits that its face and features represent — that is, to the perfect mental enlightenment and absolute repose of soul that the face and features illustrate. Now there is the worship of ignorance and superstition, based on a false idea of things. There is also the worship of intelligence, based on the knowledge of the merits of the object worshiped and the merits acquired by means of such worship. So far as my worship of the image goes that you have inquired about, I affirm that it was the worship of intelligence."

The seven wise disciples were not satisfied with this explanation; hence they asked the specific

question: "What are the merits of this particular image or idol?"

The Buddha replied as follows: "I am, indeed, myself the real and true Buddha, and yet I cannot break out of the three circles by which I am enclosed; hence the hour of death will come to me also. This image is not thus enclosed and limited, hence its age is without bound. It is not therefore the Buddha who is to be worshiped through the image, but the laws; and yet it is not the laws that are the most noble and precious things, but the merits that they represent as having been acquired through the laws. Even though I die—as I must—the laws will not cease to be. Should it ever come to pass that the laws should be destroyed, yet the merits would never be destroyed. These merits will be the guide of billions on billions of the living after my death; hence the merits represented by this image are the most illustrious and most precious things. It is on this account that I place the image on the highest seat of honor and worship it. I repeat that although the laws may be destroyed, yet the merits of this image will never lose their power so long as it is in this place in the temple. If the people, the believers, come here to wor-



ship the image, they will become the masters or possessors of the merits it represents.

“This worship, in fact, stands for the real sitting austerities and religious contemplation of the believer. Some of the merits obtained are true faith and right ideas, also the merit of being able to have no ideas, no thoughts. When this merit is acquired, one may be mocked at, and yet he will not become angry. He may be lauded to the skies, and yet he will not rejoice. Other merits also are to be acquired by the worship of this image, but the one entitled *musetsu* is beyond the power of words to explain; yet, while its merits are inexplicable, the explanation is true.<sup>1</sup>

“This idol represents the four kinds of right law and the four Buddhas of the past. Those four are the law Buddha, the reincarnation Buddha, the direct or perfect enlightenment Buddha, and the Buddha of reason and absoluteness.

“The blood relationship of the Buddhas to the world, the true and wonderful place of religious meditation, the true spirit of the observance of the austerities and of worship are clearly manifested in this image and its merits.

<sup>1</sup>The reader must needs explain this profound saying for himself or leave it as it is, since Buddha himself was unable to explain it.

“The merits of the idol being of this noble kind, I worship it.

“All merit, however, is not limited to this one idol — they are the properties of all other similar idols as well. Those who wish to accumulate merits must multiply images made after the pattern of this one.”

At this stage of the Buddha's discourse the Arhats and the Bodhisatvas bowed down and worshiped him three successive times. Their faith also was aroused and strengthened.

The Buddha, resuming the thread of his discourse, then said : “This image being of such an illustrious and precious nature it must never be removed from its exalted position in the temple, and it must always be worshiped as though it were a living and true Buddha.”

Having finished his discourse, the Buddha instructed the wise disciples to see to it that none of those who were set over all as leaders ever neglected to perform their proper austerities and acts of religious contemplation. “For,” said he, “the observance of those austerities and that meditation are of more value than a whole hundred days devoted to preaching.”

The Buddha also notified these wise followers

that some of them would lose their lives — not on account of their birth into the world and for following him, but because of acts or misdeeds or mistakes committed in a previous state of existence — their causal stage. Others he said would be persecuted by the heretics, but this also would be because of acts committed during a past causal stage of being.

When the Buddha preached this sermon he was seventy-nine years of age. He appeared exceedingly weak and frail, and the several thousand disciples about him were anxious concerning him.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE BUDDHA ENTERS NIRVANA.<sup>1</sup>

THE Buddha, who had obtained nonsurpassed, perfect enlightenment, was now about to enter Nirvana. The Bodhisatvas of the lands of equal enlightenment and the Arhats of the three ways and the four sequences were anxious and full of regret that one who had made affinity with the greatest benevolence was about to pass away. Even the color of the sky became somber because of sympathy with the event. Kings of countries both far and near, on hearing of the approaching death of Buddha, hastened to see him before he expired.

When the Buddha's last moments came, the eight great dragon kings and the king of the demons came to him with their subject followers in order to receive enlightenment and to form affinity with him.

Even the birds and the beasts came from far and near, and with drooping wings or with bowed heads expressed their sorrow and regret.

<sup>1</sup> This is the heading in the original.

The profound sorrow that was thus felt under the heavens produced a like sorrow above the heavens, and bright lights shone out and about the person of the Buddha in order to protect him.

The news of the approaching death was made known in the heaven where Indra has his abode. Indra's queen, on hearing the news and because of the great favors she had received from the Buddha in the past, desired exceedingly to see him before his death. Indra, on hearing her request, at once commanded the youths of his suite, who possessed the power of supernatural movement through space, to prepare a chariot for the queen. This chariot was composed of eight leaves, and was affixed to clouds of five colors. The queen, taking with her a vial containing the elixir of immortal youth, mounted the chariot and hastened away to the under world where the Buddha was dying. She had not proceeded very far, however, before seven monster birds came flying towards her chariot and set themselves to hinder its descent. They were so persistent in their efforts to arrest her progress that they effectually barred the way to the under world.

The queen was profoundly sorry at her inability to overcome the opposition of these monster birds,

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Buddha's End.



yet she was determined to send the vial containing the elixir of immortal youth by some other method. Taking the vial in her hand she said to it: "I wish exceedingly to take and present this to the Buddha myself, but as I am hindered both as to body and mind, do thou go and deliver thyself over to him." She threw the vial downward into space, but as it fell to the under world it caught on the branch of a tree; hence the Buddha never received it.

The Buddha died on the fifteenth day of the second month of the year and at the first hour of the day. Putting his head towards the north, lying on his right side, and facing the west he returned to the capital of Jakkwo (extinction of light).

Several hundred kings, many thousands of Arhats, the eight dragon kings, and fifty varieties of birds and beasts met together and bitterly lamented his death.

The Arhats reverently placed the body of the Buddha in a golden coffin and then conveyed it to the place of cremation. The seven wise disciples carried the front of the casket and the ten great disciples the rear. Sixteen Arhats preceded the coffin, beating gongs and drums and reciting



hymns of praise. Five hundred Arhats preceded and followed the casket and recited passages from the sacred canons.<sup>1</sup> Fifty-two Bodhisatvas formed part of the funeral procession. They bore in their hands the sacred vessels, the banner of gems, the flowers, and the burning lights.

The ten great disciples were each notable for some remarkable ability or power. One was the best in all priestly duties; another was the ablest in remembering the instruction given by Buddha; another was noted for his superior wisdom; another for his ability to understand the doctrine of emptiness, vacuity, nothingness; another was the ablest preacher; another had the most remarkable supernatural powers; another was the most powerful reasoner; another had the most heavenly eyes — that is, the power of observation; another was the most exact and scrupulous in keeping each and all of the commandments; while yet another was conspicuous for his ability to perform the most protracted secret austerities. All these became disciples because of their discontent with this evil world, and their weariness and loathing

<sup>1</sup> The Buddhist scriptures were not committed to writing until several hundred years after Buddha's death; hence these canons must have been portions of Buddha's own sermons, or else portions of the ancient Vedas or other sacred books of India.

of their own condition in it. They accepted the teachings of Buddha that their unhappy condition in the present life was but the natural and proper effect of ill-doing in their causal stage of being. They acknowledged their own blameworthiness for their present condition, and confessed it all to the Buddha. He in turn had a particular pity and love for them; hence the sorrow of these ten at the passing away of Buddha was greater than the sorrow of the others.

The sixteen Arhats who preceded the golden coffin were also the most celebrated of the particular five hundred, as they had heard all the teachings of the Buddha from the time he first began to preach.

These sixteen were brothers of the same sect with the Buddha while he was performing the austerities of his causal stage, yet they became his disciples and lamented deeply his death. Their rank was that of Bodhisatva of deliverance.

All the other Arhats and followers, because of their having also made affinity with the Buddha in his causal<sup>1</sup> stage regretted and lamented his death.

<sup>1</sup> The terms "causal" stage and "effect" stage or condition are used very loosely in this biography. It is hard to tell whether the period indicated is one enjoyed or suffered during the present life, or during some life in periods, centuries, or ages in the hoary past.

The Bodhisatvas, Arhats, and disciples decided to cremate the body of their august teacher, and to use only the fragrant sandalwood as fuel.

The kings of the countries near by, and of those far off as well, together with the eight dragon kings, the demon king, the many thousand followers, and great masses of the people, both wise and ignorant, flocked to the place and worshiped the coffin and the Buddha.

The Arhats recited passages from the Book of Wisdom, and other sacred works, and performed their devotions and austerities prior to the setting of fire to the funeral pyre.

In due time fire was set to the accumulated material; but strange to say, smoke even refused to come forth. The Arhats were greatly surprised at this, and to remedy any possible difficulty they gathered up and placed on the fuel the tinder-like bark of hemp stalks, torch material, pine cones, and withered leaves of the aloe tree. They then saturated the whole with a combustible oil, and again set fire to the heap.

This attempt to cremate the body was as unsuccessful as the first. The Arhats, the kings, the disciples, and the several myriads of people who were present were astonished beyond measure.

Fire was applied again and again, and yet many times more ; but the fuel refused to burn.

Wearied and disappointed with their efforts, and not knowing what else to do, the Arhats and disciples desisted from their labor, and sitting down began to recite the words and magical formula of the Book of Wisdom. They also performed the austerities associated with the period of profound religious contemplation. These things they continued to do during seven successive nights and days.

During this period Kasho, the first of all the Arhats, was absent for the purpose of performing especial religious meditation and austerities. When he learned by intuition of the death of the Buddha, he made his way to the place where the funeral was to occur. When he saw the seven wise disciples, the ten great disciples, the sixteen supreme Arhats, the fifty-two Bodhisatvas, and the hosts of disciples from the ten lands of equal enlightenment, he came before Ananda, the chief of all present, and asked him what all the myriads of people were lamenting about.

Ananda was enraged at the question, and said :  
“ What do you mean by such a remark ? Why do you put such a question ? It is of course to be

presumed that the accumulated merits of such a person as you, who became a follower of the Buddha at the time of his descent from the mountain where he had obtained perfect enlightenment, should be far superior to that of others, but I want you to understand that the love of the Buddha for those of us who have clung to him during these forty-nine years is as great as his love for you. We are lamenting his death, which is known as widely as the heavens extend. Look for yourself and see that even venomous reptiles, monster dragons, birds, and beasts sympathize with us, and have gathered together here to bemoan his death. Why is it therefore that you ask us why we are thus lamenting in this place?"

Kasho replied, saying that he thought that Ananda had better devote a little more time to the performance of religious meditations and religious austerities. He then laughed out boisterously three times, and thus amazed the entire multitude present.

Some of the people thought that Kasho through sudden surprise and grief had lost his reason. Others thought that he laughed at them for coming from so far and for the lamentation they were making. Others thought that the extraordinary

outburst of mirth might be but another of the wonders incident to the funeral, and there might be some profound reason in it after all.

After a period of perplexed discussion all settled down to quiet, and to see what other extraordinary thing would occur.

Kasho now rose up and said: "There is nothing the matter with me. I am neither crazy nor possessed. There is nothing particularly strange or wonderful about the Buddha's death. There are three things about this event that I am interested in and glad of; hence I laughed three times in order to express that interest and gladness.

"The Arhats, who know full well the three great principles taught during the entire nine and forty years by the Buddha, are now as greatly astonished at his death as if some strange, unexpected thing had happened, and they lament accordingly. You have now all lost your arhatship and have lapsed to your former condition of common humanity. I cannot but laugh at your consternation and disappointment. This is the reason for my first fit of laughter.

"The merits that the Buddha amassed during the forty-nine years of life as our teacher are all left to me. This is a wonderful inheritance

and souvenir. I am delighted with the legacy. This is the reason for my second fit of laughter.

“The Buddha, uncreated and undestroyed, is now exhibiting the instability and evanescence of all things, and the fact that birth and death, being and extinction are the law of life, and that extinguishment or extinction is pleasure. In order to form an affinity with all the living he has entered into Nirvana. This he has done in order to learn whether his doctrines, laws, and principles are settled in the hearts of the Bodhisatvas, the Arhats, the four classes of disciples, and all who heard his preaching, and he is at this moment shedding tears of pity over you. This is quite interesting to me, and it is the reason for my third fit of laughter. If now there are any other questions you would like to ask, do so without the least hesitation.”

Kasho said all this with so loud a voice that all the heavens reverberated with the sound. Ananda and all the Arhats expressed themselves as very much pleased with Kasho's reasons for the three fits of laughter he had indulged in.

Kasho now asked Ananda to open the coffin, as he wished to look once more on the face of the Buddha. Ananda, however, refused to do so,

saying that since the Buddha had been dead seven days, decomposition must have already begun. Kasho continuing to insist on the coffin being opened, the Buddha himself lifted the cover and called Kasho to his side.

The Arhats, on seeing that the Buddha was still alive, regretted exceedingly that they had put him into the coffin and shut him in before he was really dead.

Kasho, taking Ananda by the hand, went to the side of the now open golden casket. The Buddha stretched out both his hands from the coffin, and taking off his garment he gave that and his food-or begging- bowl to Kasho. His shoulder scarf and the mat or quilt on which he was accustomed to sit and sleep he gave to Ananda. He then closed the cover of his coffin and shut himself in. After this all within the coffin was absolutely silent and still.

Kasho and Ananda, prostrating themselves before the casket, worshiped the Buddha. The five supernatural incidents of the cremation of Buddha now occurred.

First, a golden light shone out from the midst of the golden coffin. This light was so dazzling and intense that neither the assembled people nor



the Arhats could bear to gaze at it. It shone continually for three days and three nights.

Second, the three mysterious lands, the hells and paradise, appeared in the midst of the light. Portions of the Buddha's mortal frame also became visible.

Third, the wisdom-fire of the Buddha, as it is called, now sprang forth from the golden coffin spontaneously and ignited the sandalwood that constituted the funeral pyre.

Fourth, the fire changed into the phoenix flame, and continued to burn on and on without cessation or diminution.

Fifth, at length Buddha's *Shari*<sup>1</sup> appeared as the result of the cremation of his body. As soon as it did so, the Arhats, the kings, and all the people prostrated themselves before the precious relic and with folded hands worshiped it.

The *Shari* was not visible until after a long period of waiting. The wisdom-fire of the Buddha that ignited the sandalwood of the funeral pyre burned so fiercely and the heat was so intense

<sup>1</sup>The *Shari* is said to be a hard, glittering, gemlike substance found in the cremated ashes of the dead. The dictionary explanation is as follows: " *Shari*, a small, hard substance like a gem, supposed to be left in the ashes after burning the dead body of a Buddhist saint: this is preserved as a relic, held in great veneration, and worshiped."

that no one could go near it. Smoke ceased to arise, and the color of the fire could not be seen, but the heat continued to be excessive. This fire lasted without interruption seven days and seven nights. The multitude finally decided to change the course of the river, on the banks of which the cremation took place, and so extinguish the extraordinary and unbearable fire. They succeeded in turning the entire flow of the river on the fire, but the fire was not quenched. It continued to burn on as fiercely as before.

The Arhats now entreated the dragon kings to pour their dragon water on the fire and so put it out. They consented to do so, and entering the bed of the river they ascended into the sky with their followers. Heavy rain at once began to fall and continued to do so for three successive days and nights, but the fire continued to burn as fiercely and as intensely as before. The excess of rainfall brought distress on the people and they made request of the Arhats that they would entreat the dragon kings to cease pouring down such a deluge of water from the heavens.

Kasho, Ananda, and the others of the seven wise disciples, and the ten great disciples, together with the sixteen chief Arhats, the fifty-two

Bodhisatvas, the eight dragon kings, and all the multitude of the people were greatly confirmed in their faith by these wonderful incidents, and so waited until the fire should die out itself.

Their faith and patience were at length rewarded by the appearance of the Shari and the dying down by itself of the fire.

When the Shari was secured, the entire multitude prostrated themselves and worshiped it as the Buddha.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE BUDDHA'S SHARI.

THE fact of the continued burning of the extraordinary fire became known throughout all the lands adjoining the four seas. The king of Indra, having made a solemn promise to take charge of the Buddha's Shari and put it for safe keeping in an iron tower or pagoda in the south heaven, sent his queen with an escort of the immortal youths from his kingdom to take possession of the relic and convey it to the place prepared for it.

As the queen descended within the precincts of the cremation ground, the kings, Arhats, and all the people, recognizing her, prostrated themselves before her and did her reverence.

When the queen, who had enjoyed relations of the most intimate affinity with the Buddha during at least two successive ages, and who had promised to entertain the Buddha when he should again make his appearance in this world, drew near the still fiercely burning fire, the intense heat

changed at once into a cool breeze, and the sand of the seven treasures spread over the ashes of the wood.

The king of Indra now appeared in person at the place of cremation with a golden casket, which was carried by an immortal youth from his realm. The ashes of the sandalwood and of the body of the Buddha had been so thoroughly washed by the rain poured out by the dragon kings that the Shari was exposed and lay plainly in sight, glittering like a diamond of the first water.

Indra took possession of the gem and placed it in the golden casket he had brought for its reception. He then made preparation for an immediate return to his heavenly abode.

The kings, Arhats, and people on seeing this appropriation of the Shari, and dissatisfied with the monopoly, said to Indra that it was not fair that he should thus make off bodily with that which they all desired to have a portion of; and they entreated him to break it up and give to each of them a single grain.

Indra replied that if they had really and truly made affinity with the Buddha they would find Shari enough for each and all of them in the cremated ashes before them. In case, however,

they failed to find enough to go around, he promised to break up the Shari in his possession and give to each one a single grain. He also said that the Shari now in his possession he intended to place in an iron tower or pagoda in his realm, and that not one of them was to come near to it to defile it with their unclean persons.

The kings, Arhats, and disciples searched diligently in the cremated ashes for other Shari, and their search was rewarded by the discovery of enough for each and all.

Indra and his queen now ascended to the heavens, and placing the Buddha's Shari in the iron pagoda, held a fête in its honor during an entire hundred days.

The hundred kings of as many countries returned to their respective palaces with their followers, bearing with them Shari of the Buddha. As each arrived at his destination he set up the Shari in an exalted place, gave a fête of a hundred days in its honor, and caused it to be worshiped as the living Buddha by all the people of his realm.

The eight dragon kings, perceiving the truth of the teachings of the Buddha, and recognizing him as the Buddha of unsurpassed merits, and as the

one who delivers from the sufferings of the five waters and the three burnings, took each a Shari to his own kingdom and palace in the depths of the sea, and worshiping it as the Buddha, honored and believed him more and more.

The Bodhisatvas also took Shari with them and went their respective ways.

The Arhats, obeying the commands of the Buddha, separated and went to their distant places, as he had indicated, bearing Shari with them. Arrived at their respective destinations, they offered up food and flowers to the Shari as to the living Buddha and recited passages from the Book of Wisdom during a period of one hundred days.

Others who were only novitiate priests or less, and whose homes were in other places, also offered up food before the Shari they possessed and recited passages from the second canon, as though they saw the person, and were performing those acts in the presence of the living Buddha. This they also continued to do for a full hundred days.

Thus ends the life of Prince Siddartha, the Japanese Buddha.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE BUDDHA'S PARADISE.

IN a former chapter Buddha is represented as having ascended on a cloud to the heavens with several of his followers, and having made an official and friendly call on the king of Indra and his queen. He also claimed one of the three heavens, visited at that time, as his own particular paradise. This doctrine of a Buddha's paradise, whether it had its germ in the original teachings of Buddha or not, has taken strong possession of the leading minds of the Buddhists of the Northern school, and they have elaborated it very beautifully and effectively. The same is true of the Buddhist hells, although the word horribly instead of beautifully must necessarily be used when speaking of that part of the Buddhistic doctrine of the future.

It must be borne in mind while reading this chapter that a birth into and a residence in paradise does not mean to an orthodox Buddhist that the one thus born and residing there will



continue there forever. Far from it. This paradise is but one of the stages on the path toward perfection — that is, total extinction of being. Life in this paradise is obtained by a concentrated accumulation of merits; but the force inherent in those merits ultimately dies out — according to the teaching of orthodox Buddhism — as power wanes and dies out of an electric motor when the producing machinery ceases to be active. When this occurs, another birth, as a man, becomes necessary. It is expected that this following birth will ultimate in perfection, though it may ultimate in a series of acts involving demerit. In that case the whole weary round of birth and rebirth as insect, reptile, bird, beast, demon, or sufferer of the horrible tortures of the awful hells may have to be again trod through countless ages of time. The Buddhistic paradise is only a delightful resting place for the time being, and not a permanent abode, as Christians think of their heaven.

Two, however, of the many Buddhist sects of Japan, the Shiu and the Jōdo, make a permanency of this paradise — at least so far as instruction of the masses goes. Esoteric or priestly Buddhism is essentially the same with all sects and in all

Buddhist lands. Exoteric or popular Buddhism varies with each nation. The differing sects also of each nation have tenets peculiar to themselves which they teach to the common people. The two sects in Japan already named, the Shiu and the Jōdo, particularly emphasize the doctrines of the future state. They allure the ignorant masses with the doctrine of easy access to a blissful paradise on the one hand, and terrify them with the fear of as easy a fall into the awful hells on the other. Esoteric or priestly Buddhism, however, is the only truly orthodox form of the religion.

The work from which the following chapter is taken was written in ancient times by a priest whose name was Yei-Shiu. The book, including a detailed representation of the horribly awful Buddhist hells, is entitled in Japanese, *Ōjō Yōshū*, and is issued in three pamphlet-like, fully illustrated books.

Priest Yei-Shiu says in his introduction that the easy way his book makes known of entrance into this paradise is as eyes with which to see and as feet with which to walk, for those who live in this (his) weak and degenerate age. He says that those who are intelligent and learned can study

the esoteric doctrines of Buddhism for themselves ; hence what he has studied out and written here is for the benefit of the ignorant and unintelligent, although priests and laymen alike will be benefited by its perusal. He says also that it is utterly impossible for him to adequately describe the ten delights of the place of bliss called *Gokuraku* or paradise, and that what he has written will be but as a tickling of the ear with the hairs of a rabbit !

The ten delights of paradise, as given by Priest Yei-Shiu, we will now allow him, through the medium of the English language, to expound to a wider circle of readers than he ever could have imagined that he would have. If what he has to say to the present reader is as pleasurable as he supposed the tickling of the ear with the hairs of a rabbit to be, the writer will feel well paid for the labor expended on the translation and the rendering into English of this very interesting attempt of the human mind to imagine out the highest possible delights of a paradisaical state of existence.

It is, however, almost certain that some of the ideas used by the Northern school of Buddhists concerning both Buddha and the future state

of existence came from Christian sources. The Buddhist canon of scriptures as used by the Southern division was first compiled in Ceylon between the years A.D. 412 and 432. The Northern division uses the same general books, but it seems to have expanded and enlarged them to suit its own opinions. Northern Buddhism took its way through Northern India, Cashmere, Nepaul, Thibet, China, Mongolia, and Korea to Japan.

Thibet and China were connected by trade; hence, although China had received some of its Buddhism directly from India, Thibet sent missionaries to labor in that country even before the religion was fully established within its own bounds. About the middle of the fifth century Nestorian Christian missionaries made their way into central Asia, as well as into northern China, and made numbers of Buddhist priests acquainted with the facts of the life of Christ and the essential doctrines of Christianity. Buddhism has never had any scruples in appropriating the teachings of other religions when their adoption would facilitate success for itself. It is not therefore unreasonable to suppose that the facts and ideas received by the Buddhist priests of Thibet from the Nestorian Christian missionaries were utilized

? when a life of Buddha was written; and later when the doctrines of a heaven of delights and a hell of horrors were found useful in bringing the masses into subjection and in holding them there. Yet, while the germ ideas are doubtless of Christian origin, the elaboration is entirely Oriental and Buddhistic.

#### DELIGHT THE FIRST.

The first delight that a good man experiences on his death is that of being met, escorted, and welcomed into paradise by twenty-five Bodhisatvas and thousands of Buddhist ascetics and priests. Clouds of purple spread out over the western sky, flowers fall in showers like rain, sweet mysterious odors and soft music fill the air, and a golden light suffuses every object when the dying saint first looks on the Buddha. The all-merciful Kwannon (goddess of mercy) comes forward with outstretched hands, and, bearing for him a raised treasure-dais, on which he may rest, welcomes him. The Bodhisatvas, together with innumerable saints, unite their voices in praising him, saying, "How good a man you are! You have indeed repented of your evil deeds. You have accumulated vast merits by diligently doing

that which is good, by being constantly merciful and right, by adopting wisdom as your portion instead of the evil lusts of the world. You have also gained the favor of the Buddha by worshiping him without doubting, and by all your acts of true faith. Because of all this we welcome you to this paradise." They then extend their hands and receive him into their midst.

On seeing the Buddha before his eyes the heart of the saint overflows with joy similar to that he experienced when engaged in the profoundest religious meditation. When he places the soles of his feet on the raised dais of the lotus flower he closes his eyes in deep humility. He afterwards accompanies the Buddha, Bodhisatvas, and saints, and is really born into the blissful paradise. The accumulated pleasures of four hundred millions of years enjoyed in all other places are not to be compared with a single moment of the delights of being thus met and welcomed.

These delights, however, pass away when the power of the accumulated merits is exhausted, and the man again becomes subject to the law of rebirth. While the saint, after passing through the sea of sufferings in the lower world, is seated on the lotus flower of delight his joy is indescrib-

able. An ancient sage says of this: "He who is born into paradise has immeasurable merit and delight; hence I have consecrated my life to Buddha, as I desire to be born there too."

#### DELIGHT THE SECOND.

The second delight consists in the joy of seeing the first blooming of the lotus flower. This delight is a thousandfold greater than the first one experienced by the reborn ascetic or saint. His joy now is as great as that of a blind man who after lifelong blindness first sees the light; or it is like that of a rustic who first sees the interior of a palace.

The saint, on looking at himself, perceives that he has a body like unto pure gold, that his clothing is of the richest material adorned with golden tassels, that he has on a crown composed of the most precious gems and a necklace of similar material. His eyes become clear and pure through beholding the Buddha, and he hears as of old the preaching of the law and the doctrines.

Everything is new, strange, and mysterious to him. Look which way he may, he sees magnificence and splendor which no language can express, and his eyes are taken captive and they





The Blooming of the Lotus Flower.





go astray hither and thither on the clouds. The voice of the sacred teaching is full and clear in this land of treasures. Here are palaces of gold and vast houses built of gems. Here also are forests of richest green, and lakes of treasure resplendent both within and without in which wild and other flying birds take their delight. The saints who come here are as the sands of a river, as the drops of showers of rain. Of the saints who live here some are floating up in the sky, some are seated on the tops of the palaces, some are reading the sacred books, some are preaching the doctrines, while others are engaged in silent, reposeful, religious meditation. Some again cross to the river and bathe in its waters, while yet others make music and scatter flowers, going hither and thither from palace to palace. All, however, unite in worshipping the Buddha and in chanting praises to him. The Buddhas and Bodhisatvas of the place are as numerous as the clouds and the flowers, and cannot be described in detail.

When we turn our eyes on Nyorai (the Buddha) we see him seated on the lotus flower for a throne in the midst of the treasure lake. Kwannon and Geishi sit with great dignity, the

one on his right and the other on his left, and both on thrones of the lotus flower. An infinite number of saints are seated all around these figures. At the foot of each of the treasure trees that surround the lake a Buddha and two Bodhisatvas are seated, whose persons shine with brightness. They are clothed in the richest of garments, and the ground about them is covered with crystals whose light is as that of an infinite number of torches shining through a dark night.

Kwannon and Geishi now descend from their lotus-flower thrones and come before the saint and comfort him with voices of great compassion. The saint then descends from his dais of lotus flowers and prostrates himself with his face to the ground. Two Bodhisatvas now conduct him into the presence of the Buddha, whose noble form of a thousand virtues he worships, kneeling on the steps of the seven treasures. He now hears of the one real and true path, and enters the sea of the satisfaction of all desires. Tears of joy like torrents of rain flow down his cheeks, and his heart, long hungry for the full truth, is satisfied.

A Bodhisatva has left us this saying: "Although one may have the root of goodness within him,

yet if he have doubt, the lotus flower will not bloom for him. Those only who are full of faith, and who are clean and pure can see the Buddha and the blooming of the lotus flower."

#### DELIGHT THE THIRD.

The third delight consists in the acquisition of supernatural power. The inhabitants of paradise have bodies of a golden color, which are of like color and purity both within and without. Their bodies also emit a bright shining light, and possess the thirty-two marks or features of the Buddha. There is nothing in this lower world with which to compare the ornament and grandeur of the bodies of the living beings in paradise. The color and the shining light of the bodies of even Buddha's humblest followers are as here described. The light that shines out from the form of a Bodhisatva shines out and illumines to a distance of a hundred *yojona*, myriads on myriads of miles, although some say that this light penetrates to a distance of a hundred thousand *yojona*. The noblest and richest of the kings and the emperors of the countries of this lower earth, when clad in their most magnificent garments and decorated with their costliest jewels

and gems, seem as beggars in comparison with the richness and splendor of those who dwell in the Buddha's paradise.

The dwellers in this paradise obtain five supernatural powers. By means of them they can see all that is being transacted in the whole universe without moving from their places, if that be their desire. In the same way they can hear all that is said in the entire universe. They can also perceive what is in the thoughts and hearts of all living things as clearly as we can see objects reflected in a mirror. The whole universe comes to lie at their feet, as it were, if that be their desire. As to travel, though they journey over the millions on millions of miles of mountain and valley through all the countries of the earth, they know of no weariness.

These wonderful powers the dwellers in the lower world may well be envious of. Who in this world has obtained even one of these five supernatural powers? Who has obtained even one of the thirty-two marks of a Buddha? Who can light anything without a match? Who can make anything to glisten and shine without the aid of the sun? Who can go even to the nearest place without walking? Who can see objects

even through the thinnest paper? Who can know the thought or desire that is in the heart of another? All in this lower world are confined and hindered as though shut up in a cage. How different it is with the beings dwelling in paradise! They make no effort to produce or to accomplish anything, yet everything comes to their wish as the natural reward of their former accumulations of merit.

What a joy the possession of the five mysterious and supernatural powers must be to the dwellers in paradise!

#### DELIGHT THE FOURTH.

The fourth delight consists in the mere fact of having existence in such a mysteriously beautiful place. The Buddha has adorned the place according to the delight of his forty-eight desires, hence the wondrous beauty of every scene and object. The most beautiful colors only are to be seen; and the sweet sounds of full deliverance are the only tones that are heard. The odor of every object is most fragrant, and the flavor of every article of food the most delicious. The very earth of paradise is composed of emeralds. The paths and roadways are level and wide, and

are wonderfully clean. Overhead and all along the paths and roadways golden threads, cords, and festoons are strung. On these paths the softest and richest carpets are spread for the inhabitants to walk on. Palaces and magnificent residences number millions on millions ; yet one can have a large or a small one, a high or a low one, according to the individual taste. The most wonderful carpets are spread on all the floors of the rooms of both palaces and houses, even though their floors are made of precious stones. A sevenfold balustrade runs along the top of all the buildings, and millions on millions of flags and banners are sent floating on the breeze. Canopies of rich material are spread above the balustrades on the tops of the houses, and heavenly beings with musical instruments sit there and unite in singing the merits and praises of the Buddha.

Within the grounds there are innumerable bathing pools ; also, magnificent temples. The floor of the golden bathing pool is covered with silver sand, while the floor of the silver pool is covered with sand of gold. The floor of the crystal pool is covered with emerald sand, while the floor of the emerald pool has sand of crystal for its covering. There are also pools of coral, of amber, of

agate, of pearls, of gems, of purple and gold, and in every case the color of the water and the covering for the floor is reversed as in the case of those already mentioned.

The water in all the pools is called the water of the eight virtues or merits, and is so transparent that all the thousand treasures can be seen through it. The eight merits of this water are clearness, coolness, sweetness, softness, moistness, deliciousness, satisfying hunger and thirst, and nourishing to eyes, ears, and all other parts of the individual organism, thus increasing all the good qualities of the one who bathes in and uses it.

Many magnificent flowers bloom in these and other pools. The lotus flower in all shades of green, yellow, red and white abounds there. A gentle breeze blows over both pools and flowers and fills the air with delicious fragrance. A Bodhisatva sits on each of the ordinary lotus flowers while a Buddha sits on each of the large and shining blossoms. Ripples and wavelets of the soft waters of the pools play about the flowers and sing the praises of Buddhistic teaching in a marvelously sweet voice. Sometimes they preach of wisdom; sometimes of the emptiness and nothingness and nonentity of all things; some-



times of the ten powers and imperfections and sometimes of great deliverance. The sounds of the ripples and wavelets of the waters of the pools are in harmony with the studies and teachings of the Bodhisatvas concerning purity and reality, nothingness and annihilation.

Birds of varied kind and plumage make their homes in and about these pools. Wild geese, wild ducks, mandarin ducks, snipes, white herons, cranes, swans, peacocks, parrots, the Buddha's bird of paradise, and many others of sweet song and bright color adorn the place. They sport together day and night; they sing the name of Buddha; they recite the sacred laws, the duties of ascetics, the five powers, and the seven ways of deliverance. The name even of suffering is not known in that place, not even that of the evil path of the reincarnations. The voice of joy only fills all the air. The Bodhisatvas and those who heard the teachings of the Buddha directly from his lips bathe in the pools and make the water deep or shallow according as they like it. They thus wash from their hearts all the remains of evil, and make them clean and pure. After bathing, some recline in the shade at the base of the trees; others soar up into the sky; others

recite the sacred books, and yet others explain them. Some sit and listen, some engage in religious meditation, while others go and come here and there at their pleasure. Those who have not attained to the rank of Bodhisatva attain to it at this time. There is not one who does not rejoice in the conditions of life in this place and in the opportunity of satisfying the understanding and of getting to the bottom of all the doctrines.

There is also in this paradise a river of clear and pure water. The bottom of the river is covered with sand of gold. The river has the virtue of becoming deep or shallow, warm or cool, as one may wish. The inhabitants gather together on its banks and enjoy themselves in its waters. Sandalwood trees are thickly planted along the banks of the river. The leaves of the trees are the color of purple and gold, and are luxuriant in their growth.

The branches of the trees are of silver, the blossoms are of coral, while the fruit is of pearls. Some trees have fruit of but one costly kind, while others have all the seven treasures mingled together. The composition of the trees being of this magnificent character, they are very beautiful to look upon, and shine out brightly in all their

loveliness. The wind blows among the leaves soft as any zephyr, while softly falling flowers drop into the midst of the river and gently glide along its bosom, filling the air with fragrance.

The sound of the breeze is wonderfully sweet and possesses all the five sounds. The music that it makes is that of all the one thousand kinds performed at once. Those who hear it at once begin to think of the Buddha, of his laws and doctrines, and of the ascetics. All the music of the lower world is not for a single moment to be compared to this heavenly harmony.

The flowers bloom out from among the leaves, the fruit appears from among the blossoms and together make whole canopies of richness and treasure. When any of the inhabitants wish to see the lands of the Buddha throughout the entire universe, they have only to look to these trees, for everything they wish to see will be reflected there.

Immortal youths play freely in and about the palaces, and their ornaments are of the most brilliant and shining gems. Lovely trees, sweet flowers, and tender grass grow all about, and give unspeakable joy to those who touch them. Various costly hangings are hung up in the air and on





them are attached sweet bells which ring out the teachings of the Buddha. The varied and wonderfully colored flowers of the place fall down in showers like rain. Varied and beautiful garments and ornaments also come floating down like flying birds. All these are offerings to the Buddha. An innumerable number of musical instruments float in the air and of themselves play out the sound of the laws and doctrines.

The whole land is full of numberless kinds of fragrant incense, unguents, and perfumes, all of which can be had as one pleases. Those who inhale the sweet odor of the incense become free from all uncleanness. If any Bodhisatva, Arhat, or other living thing of the land wishes for it, a table covered with the seven delicacies appears before him, with the articles held in seven costly dishes. The taste of this food cannot be compared with anything in the lower world. The food becomes sweet or sour according to the wish of the eater. The heart of one who inhales but the odor of this food becomes light, and the one who eats it becomes strong and healthy. After the meal is finished, the table and dishes disappear of themselves, and appear again in the same way when they are wanted.

Garments for wear are also provided in the same wonderful manner. One has but to wish for any article of dress and it at once comes floating down. When the praises of the Buddha are sung and the conduct is in full harmony with this law and doctrine, suitable and wonderful garments come forth and fit themselves to the person of the wearer. There is therefore to the dweller in paradise no need of cutting, sewing, dyeing, washing, and repairing of clothes. The light of the place also is such that neither lamp, moon, nor sun is needed. There is also no spring, no summer, no autumn, no winter there. Heat and cold alike are tempered by the wind of merits and natural virtues. Those on whom this wind blows have sensations delightful as those of the ascetics when most profoundly involved in religious contemplation, and when they have practically attained to the stage of personal extinguishment or annihilation.

Every morning the most wonderful flowers bloom out freshly and fill the Buddha's land with fragrance. When they fall to the earth they make a carpet softer than the softest down. When trodden underfoot they sink down to a depth of several inches, but spring back to their former position as soon as the foot is lifted. When the morning

hours have passed away the flowers also disappear, but they are renewed again at noon, at eve, and at midnight.

All these wonderful conditions of life delight those who reside in the land, yet no spirit of covetousness ever possesses them. Because of the merits of the place their own merits increase and are enhanced. The Paradise of the West stands preëminent among all the lands of the Buddha. All the treasures, excellences, and beauties of the two hundred thousand millions of Buddhas are gathered together and concentrated in the western paradise. Those who really understand the conditions of entrance to this paradise can have the heaviest sins they have committed during almost endless periods of time removed, and they can obtain a birth into this Paradise of the West after death.

The Bodhisatva whose name is Seshin says of this place: "The Paradise of the West surpasses everything in all the three worlds for richness and beauty. For width it is as wide as the broad sky. In it there are thousands on thousands of varieties of flowers; clear, sweet streams of living water, and pure, translucent pools or lakes. The wind blows softly over all and diffuses the fragrant odor



of the flowers everywhere. The palaces and mansions are built of gems, with doors of gold and pillars of the seven costly treasures. Their majesty and beauty no pen can describe. From the middle portion of the palaces all the ten directions of the universe can be plainly seen. The trees of the place shine with a bright mysterious light. Balustrades of gems surround the palaces. Transparent network interlaced with varied threads is spread across the sky, and on it are hung gold and silver bells which ring out the sound of the law and the doctrines. In short, anything and everything that may please those who reside in this paradise is provided for their delight; hence I too wish to be born in that land of the Buddha."

#### DELIGHT THE FIFTH.

The fifth delight consists in the unceasing nature of the joy of life in this paradise.

The joys of the lower heavens are not free from the five decays; even the highest of them is not free from the travail of transmigration. This being the case with the heavens, how must it be with the world of men? Few of them can obtain what they desire, and their joys come to them mixed with pains. The rich man cannot live long to

enjoy his riches ; and those who have long life are destitute of riches. Many are born in the morning only to die in the evening. It is, indeed, as one of the sacred books says : "The air that is breathed out does not wait for the air that is breathed in." Not only does human joy depart, but pain comes in its stead. The punishment due to their sins also falls on them after their death. It is not so, however, with those who dwell in the western paradise. They each and all are full of benevolence, and they love each other as though they were the children of the same parents. They walk together on the same pavements of amber, they play together in the same groves of the sandalwood tree, they live in the same palaces, and bathe together in the same pools.

If at any time they wish to be absolutely calm and at rest, the whispers of the wind, the ripples of the waves, and the sounds of musical instruments die away and are heard no more. If they wish to see distant lands, even the hidden places in deep valleys and those on high mountains stand out plainly before their eyes. When weary of seeing them they at once disappear.

The same is true of all the sweet odors, of all articles of delicious food, and of the hearing of

the law and doctrines. These all come at once when desired and they disappear when no longer wanted.

The inhabitants of this land of unceasing joy sometimes amuse themselves by crossing over great spaces on bridges made of clouds; sometimes by playing on musical instruments or by dancing; sometimes by flying high up into the sky; sometimes by accompanying the saints and other heavenly beings on their journeys; sometimes by disporting themselves in the bathing pools; sometimes by calling on those just born into the paradise, and informing them of the nature of the place they have entered, and of the fact that Amida Buddha is the master of the place and that all his commands must be obeyed. Sometimes they enjoy themselves by taking their seats on the pedestaled lotus flower in the midst of the pools of treasures, and, since they have now obtained the power of controlling destiny, they converse with each other about the things of the ages long since passed away. They also narrate to each other the way in which they came to believe in, obey, and follow the Buddha; the sacred books they have read, the commandments they have kept, the doctrines and laws they have

tried hard to observe, the good deeds they have performed, the alms they have given, and of other things through the doing of which they have attained to the delight of being born into this paradise. They also converse with each other of the means used by the Buddha to benefit all living things and of the ways of deliverance from the sufferings of the three evil paths. Sometimes they saunter out together to the tops of the treasure mountains, sometimes they sit down silently in order to engage in religious contemplation<sup>1</sup> and thus enjoy the delight of having no thought, no idea, no feeling at all. Sometimes they unite in reciting all the sacred books at once. At other times they propound to each other and then explain the most profound and difficult of the doctrines.

All who are born into this paradise never suffer from the four miseries of human life ; namely, birth, old age, disease, death ; and since they can have anything they desire by merely wishing for it, the sorrow and grief of separation from

<sup>1</sup> " Religious contemplation," as the term is used throughout the book, involves absolute silence and abstraction. The object sought after seems to be loss of all thought and all feeling, the state of extinguishment of all thought and of all emotion being the ideal one from the Buddhistic standpoint.

loved ones is not known. Hate also and lustful desires they are free from ; hence they are as white and as pure as silken floss, as a flowing stream. Their bodies are also so strong that nothing can injure them and they are so clean and pure that they cannot be blackened or defiled even though steeped in the blackest mire. Such being the nature of the bodies of the people of this land, their hearts being as clean and pure also as their bodies, they never suffer from the five prevailing sicknesses and decays of the earthly life. They can go through fire and water without sustaining the least harm ; and although an infinite number of soldiers should shoot at them with arrows and thrust at them with sharp spears they would remain uninjured. They can also go about freely in the three worlds, the six bewildering paths, in the eight hells of great heat, and into the eight hells of great cold to save the living creatures there, and yet suffer no harm.

Those who live in the lower world are clothed with flesh ; hence they are weak ; and since their hearts are neither pure nor strong their lusts are higher than the highest mountain and deeper than the deepest sea. Thus they are ever fascinated

and tempted by beauty and harass themselves in order to get possession of it. They covet the things they do not possess, and are never satisfied with the things they have. They thus worry out their lives with their lusts. This covetousness not only becomes the cause of their suffering from the one hundred and eight troubles of that world, it also necessitates future rebirths. Besides this it brings on sufferings from without, as fire, flood, hunger, thirst, swords, oppression by others, quarrels, great cold and great heat.

When, however, one is born into this paradise all these troubles cease at once. The body becomes strong and all the pleasures unceasing in their nature. When once a person becomes seated on the pedestaled lotus flower he becomes far separated from the suffering of the three worlds, the six bewildering paths, and from the ocean of life and death. In this place there are not even the names of pain and of joy. There is no pain there, no, not even so much in size as the poppy seed.

The Bodhisatva Ryūju has said the following of this place: "When a man is born into the Buddha's paradise he never falls into the pathway of fighting demons. The sole desire of my life is

that I may be born into that place ; and to this end I worship Amida Buddha with my whole heart."

#### DELIGHT THE SIXTH.

The sixth delight of the Buddha's paradise consists in the joy of entertaining and of communing with friends.

The things that men in the lower world desire to do do not come about as they wish. The trees and the grain may wish to be calm and still, but the wind blows and thrashes them about. Children wish to provide for and protect their aged parents, but the parents do not wait for this desire of their children to be realized ; or the children when they attain to mature life may be so poor that they cannot carry out their desires. The same disappointments are also experienced when the relations and desires are those of master and servant, teacher and pupil, husband and wife, or mutual friends. Through these unfruitful and unrealized desires other rebirths and transmigrations become necessary. How bitter the sorrow of these disappointed ones must be when widely separated by life and rebirths in the six bewildering paths from their friends and from those they have desired to aid or serve ! During these exist-

ences and periods who can tell whether the birds on this mountain or the beasts in that field may or may not be one's own father or mother?

An ancient poem expresses this thought in the following words: "The cuckoo singing off in the distance there—is it my father or is it my mother?"

Men often do sinful deeds because of their children; hence they fall into the hands of hungry demons, of fighting demons, and of hells, and suffer accordingly. Living beings are not the saints, hence they do not possess the mysterious powers; neither can they see the past nor requite the good they have received in other existences. They merely go on from one path, or rebirth, to another through endless ages, as a wheel revolves on ever and ever without other change or progress.

When, however, men are born into paradise, the mysterious powers and high wisdom are acquired, and communication and intercourse with relatives and friends can be carried on as they may please. They can see the places where their relatives and friends are reborn, and by the mysterious powers their eyes have acquired they can see them and with their ears hear their voices and their words.



They can also know their hearts, and can follow them about and make their changing forms visible to them. They can also teach them and lead them in the path of deliverance.

Because of the mysterious power acquired through birth into this paradise the entire past of the person's life through all its transmigrations, conditions, and experiences becomes fully known, together with the reasons for birth into this place. The present condition of all who may now be passing through those rebirths and experiences is also fully known. It thus happens that the dwellers in paradise know the deepest thoughts of the heavenly beings, of men, of birds, of beasts and of insects. Ah, when and in what far-off future shall we be able to attain to birth in that happy country, and acquire such knowledge?

One of the ancient sages has said of this as follows: "When this life of mine is ended I desire to be born in the Paradise of the West, and thus escaping from all distress and anxiety ever live with Amida Buddha before my eyes. If I can attain to this I will help all the living to attain to the felicity I may enjoy, neither less nor more."

A Bodhisatva has said of this paradise: "The

light of the lustrous joys of the place attracts the thoughts of all living things, and benefits them as it shines on out from the assembly of the Buddhas."

#### DELIGHT THE SEVENTH.

The seventh delight of the Buddha's paradise consists in the joy of meeting and associating with other saints. The Bodhisatvas and the saints are virtuous above all measure.

One of those Bodhisatvas or saints, named Fuken, has said of himself that "Any living being who has not yet done any good, and any disciple of Buddha who has as yet done but little good, cannot even hear my name, much less will such be able to see me and associate with me. When any living thing has heard my name he will never more backslide; and the same is true of any who may see me even in a dream."

This Fuken is like the sky, and lives by the truth and not by things produced out of the earth. He appears to living beings according as they may desire his presence, and gives them the things they wish, and so makes them at one with himself. He possesses manifold mysterious powers which he exercises in all the ten directions, that is, throughout the entire universe.

Another of the saints is Monjū, who is the source of the wisdom possessed by all the Buddhas, whether they are of the past, the present, or the future. It is through his instruction that they all attain to the highest rebirth. Any living thing in the whole universe who hears the name of Monjū or who calls his form to mind or who sees his glorious features in any of the forms in which he may appear will be able to understand the laws and the doctrines of Buddhism and will attain to birth in the Buddha's paradise. Those who hear only the name of Monjū will have the sins which they may have committed through measureless ages taken entirely away. Those who invariably reverence and worship him, offering flowers before him, will always in their rebirths be born in the homes of priests. Those who recite the name of Monjū for a day only can see him appear before them; while any who are hindered from doing these deeds by their sins can obtain what may be desired by seeing him in a dream. One who sees the form of Monjū does not fall into the evil ways of transmigration for myriads on myriads of years. One who recites his name does not at death fall into the fires of the awful hells, but is

born into the land of the Buddhas even though he may have many sins. All the good deeds done by the myriads on myriads of Buddhas for the benefit of all living things are incomparably less than similar deeds done by Monjū in but a limited period of time. Because of this the merits and the happiness of those who recite the name of Monjū are much greater than the merits and the happiness of those who recite the names of the hundreds of thousands of millions of the Buddhas.

Another of the saints, Miroku, is possessed of merits that are infinite. It is impossible for one who has only heard his name to fall even into the dark hells. One who recites his name but once is delivered from all the sins committed during long periods of time; while to those who worship him and extol his merits sins committed during a hundred thousand millions of periods are forgiven. The desire, the wisdom, and the good deeds of Miroku, all of which he accomplished through hard study and ascetic endeavor during infinite *kalpas* of time, are so immeasurably great that no pen can describe them. .

Jizō is another of the eminent saints with whom the one born into the Buddha's paradise

has the joy of meeting and associating. The desire of Jizō to do merciful and helpful deeds for all living things surpasses that of the desire of all the other great ones of the place. A verse in one of the sacred books says of him as follows: "As the merits of Jizō are infinite, the merit of reciting his name for a single day surpasses the merit acquired by reciting the names of other saints and great ones during unlimited kalpas<sup>1</sup> of time. His merits are so vast that they cannot be sufficiently extolled during even a hundred kalpas. Let all living things worship him."

Another of the great ones, Kwanseon by name, in the paradise, says of himself as follows: "If I do not save a suffering man who recites my name, I cannot attain to perfect enlightenment myself." He says in another place: "There are those who recite the names of various Buddhas throughout endless ages, and there are others who recite my name but for a limited period of time; yet both obtain equal merit. I will enable those who recite my name and worship me to attain to the land where there is no backsliding."

<sup>1</sup> A kalpa is said to be 4,320,000,000 years. Buddhist writers are very generous in their allowances of time.

By hearing the name of Kwanseon one is delivered from all suffering. Kwanseon suffers for such; going even into the hells in their behalf. His oath to save is as deep as the sea, and could not be measured during even limitless kalpas. He has served the many hundred thousand millions of Buddhas. He has ever entertained the purest desires, and has studied the ways of obtaining wisdom, and all the mysterious powers. There is no land where Kwanseon does not manifest himself. He willingly helps all those who are in suffering or in trouble, and those who are dying. Possessing all merits he looks on all living things with eyes of great mercy. He is a Bodhisatva whose merits are as unfathomable as the deepest sea. Let all therefore believe in and worship him.

Another of the saints in the Buddha's paradise is the Bodhisatva Dai-seishi. This saint says of himself as follows: "I have been able to save those who being still in the evil path of transmigration could not cross over or break away from the sea of ever recurring life and death." Dai-seishi shines with the light of his wisdom on all such, and so enables them to make their escape. He has the name of Dai-seishi because he has

such mighty power. Those who see him can have all their sins, committed during limitless kalpas, removed. He is never reborn by the usual process into this lower world. He invariably resides in some of the lands of the Buddhas. He always preaches the law and the doctrines to great multitudes, and thus acts as the helper of Amida Buddha. Those who hear his words acquire eyes of clearest vision. The mysterious power of Dai-seishi pervades all lands and he manifests himself to all the living. All who worship him with a faithful heart he guides into this world of joy and delight.

Bodhisatvas like these are as numerous in the Buddha's paradise as the sands of the river. Their forms are beautiful, their merits are perfect, they surround Amida Buddha, and they are worshiped and revered by all who see them.

Saints of a lower order, even though they also have attained to the possession of mysterious powers and have all the worlds under their control, are infinitely numerous. Although one should begin to count them on first being born into paradise, and then continue to count on and on through limitless kalpas, yet the smaller number could only thus be told. Those uncounted

would still be as the water in the great sea. While such an enumeration would be going on some of these saints would be going to other lands of the Buddha, while others would be attaining to Buddhahood. The whole number of saints, however, in paradise would neither increase nor decrease: for in this respect paradise is like the great sea into which many rivers empty their waters without either adding to or taking from its quantity of drops. The Bodhisatvas, however, outnumber all the other saints of the place.

It thus comes about that paradise is full of saints who constantly see and converse with each other at their pleasure, and seek after the same way and doctrines. This vast number of saints worship Amida Buddha, and make offerings to him of beautiful flowers, costly garments, fragrant incense, and sweet music; and receive from him instruction in the doctrines and the laws of transformation. The aspect of paradise is that of a great marketplace where vast concourses of people come and go, some from the north, some from the south, some from the east, and some from the west, transact their business, and then go on their way again, a bustling, busy crowd.

How exceedingly happy those must be who are



born into this paradise and have the delight of thus meeting and associating with and of being instructed by and of having intimate relations with that galaxy of saints!

#### DELIGHT THE EIGHTH.

The eighth delight consists in the joy of seeing Buddha and in hearing directly from his lips his doctrines. It is very difficult in this fleeting and lower world to see the Buddha and to hear his instruction.

The Bodhisatva Shishiku has said of this that after studying the way of deliverance during infinite kalpas one now sees with delight the holy Buddha Shaka-muni. Up to this time we have been like blind turtles meeting with floating groves of trees.

While the Buddha was in the lower world only the people of three hundred million houses out of nine hundred millions had the privilege of seeing him. Three hundred million more heard his name, but did not see his face; while the remaining three hundred million neither heard his name nor saw his face. This being the case with those who lived in the lower world while the Buddha was there, how is it likely to be after his death?

One of the sacred books says that "although sinful living beings, because of their evil deeds, may not even hear the name of the three precious things of Buddhism, namely, The Buddha, The Law, and The Order of Ascetics, during infinite kalpas, yet that in the Buddha's paradise the saint both sees the Buddha and hears the law from his lips."

The bodai tree planted in this paradise has wide-spreading branches which are covered with all manner of rich treasures. A net of treasures is spread all over it and costly necklaces of jewels are hung among the branches. When the wind moves the leaves and sways the limbs of the tree, the sound of the mysterious laws and doctrines are heard in all the lands of the Buddhas throughout the universe. Those who hear this sound obtain acuteness of hearing and a deep understanding of the doctrines. All who see the color of this tree, inhale its odor, taste its fruit, receive light from its brilliance, and understand its nature are made entirely pure through all their six roots or senses and are able to perfect themselves in Buddhism. Under this tree there is a richly ornamented throne on which Amida Buddha is seated. It is impossible, however, to describe his

wonderful features. His hair is shining bright and is the color of the clear sky. His eyes are the color of the lotus flower, as the full autumn moon. His lips are rosy red; his voice is like that of the Karyō-binga;<sup>1</sup> his breast is as the front of a lion; his legs as the legs of a giant and the soles of his feet are exceedingly beautiful. The eighty-four thousand points of perfection are fully realized in his body of purple and gold. A wonderful light as of several billions of suns shines round about him. When he preaches the doctrines in the hall of the seven treasures his voice is so sweet that the very heavens are enchanted with the sound; and Bodhisatvas, first disciples of Buddha, heavenly beings, and all living things in the paradise worship him with clapping of hands. The wind blows softly through the trees, the branches laden with the seven treasures flutter before it, beautiful flowers fall thickly all about, and heavenly beings make sweet music and dance with delight. It is impossible for one to fully describe the gratitude, the cheerfulness, the delight, and the joy experienced by the dwellers in this place.

<sup>1</sup> One of the birds of paradise, that has a human face and a lovely song.

The Buddha at times reveals himself in a body of huge proportions, either under the tree of treasures or in the pools of clear water. He preaches the doctrines to the people that they wished to hear while they were studying Buddhism in the lower world, and according to the amount of faith they possess. He thus preaches various doctrines on various occasions and so gives to all a full <sup>and</sup> understanding of his laws. Kwannon and Seishi sit the one on his left and the other on his right and enter into discussion with him concerning the doctrines. The Buddha also consults with them concerning many things.

The inhabitants of other lands of the Buddha, toward the east, come to this Paradise of the West to worship and to offer sacrifice. On seeing the wondrous beauty of the Buddha's paradise, they express the wish that their lands were as beautiful. The Buddha on hearing this turns a little on his seat, smiles, and shines out a bright light from his mouth over all the countries throughout the universe. This light goes around his body thrice, enters his head, and then shines out through his mouth. Kwannon then bows down and reverently worships the Buddha and asks the meaning of the smile. The Buddha

replies in a voice like unto thunder, in which all the eight sounds are perfect, and says: "I know well the desires of the Bodhisatvas and of the multitude of living things who live in all the ten directions, that is, throughout the entire universe. They seek for the land of beauty, of treasure, and of purity; and they desire to attain to Buddhahood through a clear understanding of the highest principles. They shall indeed attain to the object of their desire and shall come to understand that all laws and doctrines are like a vision or a dream or like to the shadow of a flash of lightning. They shall attain to a land like this by understanding that all laws are empty and void and that we ourselves do not exist at all."

The sound of the flowing water, the songs and the chirpings of the birds, and the sighing of the trees all preach out the same mysterious law.

The Bodhisatva Ryūju says of the Buddha: "Seated on a throne of the pedestaled lotus flower in the midst of the pool of treasure the Buddha preaches of the inconstancy and the vacuity of law and of the nonexistence of the I, myself; and he says that all law and doctrine and all existence is like to the image of the moon reflected in water, like the dew, like the light-

ning flash. He thus reveals the principles that are constant.<sup>1</sup> Because of this I worship the Buddha always, and I desire to be born into the Buddha's paradise — that land of ease and delight — with all living things."

#### DELIGHT THE NINTH.

The ninth delight of the Buddha's paradise consists in the joy of directly offering sacrifices to the Buddhas according to the desire of the heart. When the hundred billions of the living in paradise desire to make offerings of the heavenly flowers to the Buddhas in other worlds, they first go before Amida Buddha and obtain his permission. This secured they gather together their friends and with great rejoicing visit the numberless Buddhas in the other worlds. Some take their flight directly through the sky, while others ride on the clouds. Reaching their desired country in an instant of time, they make offerings of the flowers of paradise to the respective Buddhas, and worship them. Besides flowers they also make offerings of varieties of fragrant in-

<sup>1</sup> The principles that are constant would seem to be the assumption that everything is unreal, and that nothing in reality exists at all. It seems strange that the hearing of such preaching directly from the lips of the Buddha should be regarded as one of the delights of paradise.

cense, of delicious food, of rich apparel, and of musical instruments. These offerings come into their hands of their own accord when they are desired.

The offerings and worship finished, the saints return to their own abode in the Buddha's paradise, where they take their food, recite the sacred books, and in other ways enjoy the delights of the place. It is said also that daily offerings are made to the Buddhas at three o'clock in the afternoon. While these worshipers were in the lower world, the more they heard of the merits and joys of the Buddha's lands as they are described in the sacred books, the more they wished that they might be born there; and they used often to ask of each other if the time would ever come when they would be able to see the Buddha and offer sacrifices to him. Now they are born into his paradise, and they can visit all the lands of all the Buddhas whenever they wish, in an instant of time, by virtue of their own power, or by the power of the Buddha. Thus it comes to pass that they can meet the saints, hear the doctrines, receive the sacred writings, and offer sacrifices to all the Buddhas in any and all of the Buddha lands. How happy they must be!

The Bodhisatva Ryūju has said of this condition: "How joyful a state! How happy must they be! This is the reward for good deeds done in past ages of existence."

#### DELIGHT THE TENTH.

The tenth delight consists in the joy of advancing in Buddhism. It is exceedingly difficult in this lower world to study Buddhism and to attain to Buddhahood, for the reasons that those who suffer are always grieving, and those who enjoy are always weakened. It follows therefore that both pain and pleasure are far from the way of deliverance. Prosperity and adversity alike lead to the evil way of transmigration. Although some few are converted and study the doctrines, yet it is very hard for them to attain to success. Anxiety will arise in their minds, and outside conditions will draw their hearts away and they will go back to the three evil ways. As the form of the moon reflected on the water is easily moved to and fro by the rippling wave, so is the heart moved from its study and devotions. As but few out of the countless eggs of fishes become fish, and but little of the embryo fruit of the trees comes to maturity and ripeness, so also but few of



those who begin the study of Buddhism in this lower world attain to full knowledge and to Buddhahood. It is in harmony with this that the celebrated Mokuren fell back—backslided—after sixty kalpas of endeavor.

The Buddha Shaka-muni persevered in living an ascetic life and in performing the austerities during infinite kalpas of time and thus accumulated his vast merits and virtues. He never fell back, but was always diligent in his study and endeavor in the way of Buddhahood. There is no living thing in the three great worlds for which Buddha has not devoted himself to study and to ascetic austerities. It was to deliver all the living that he did this.

Other living beings are too weak to thus succeed in securing their own deliverance even. They are like young and weak elephants which die an untimely death by arrow and by sword.

The Bodhisatva Ryūju say of this as follows: “When a man pours half a gallon of hot water on ice that is a hundred miles in extent, it seems as though the ice to some extent is diminished, but as a matter of fact it is not so. The following morning the ice in the place where the hot

water was poured has become to the extent of the water that was poured on it so much the thicker than it was before."

It is thus with the ordinary man in this lower world who seeks deliverance from his sufferings. Covetousness, anger, injustice, and the like increase more and more.

In the Buddha's paradise, however, it is not so. The surroundings and relationships of the living beings there are so helpful that instead of falling back they make constant progress in Buddhism. They are supported and urged on by the power and desire of Amida Buddha; and because of being constantly illuminated by the light that shines out from the Buddha their own devotional mind increases in power. The sounds of the flowing water, the singing of the birds, the sighing of the wind in the trees, the tinkling of the bells, the voices of the saints, all intensify their desires, arouse their minds, and make them earnest in their worship of the Buddha, in the recitation of the sacred books, and in thought concerning the law and the order.

Again, their acquaintances and friends being exclusively Bodhisatvas, there are no outside conditions to disturb their minds, draw off their hearts,

and cause them to fall away. Besides this their lives are of equal length to the life of the Buddha, hence they have infinite ages at their disposal for study and advancement in Buddhism.

The sacred book Keron says: "When one sees the Buddha but once only, all hindrances to deliverance are at once removed." If the seeing of the Buddha but once results like this, how must it be when he is seen all the time? The hindrances to deliverance from suffering and from misery, although infinite in number, will melt away as snow before the springtime sun.

The beings in paradise have neither self-will nor anxiety of any kind. They all acquire a heart of great mercy, advance naturally in the understanding of Buddhism, attain to the rank of Bodhisatva, to the profoundest knowledge of the way of deliverance, and finally they become Buddhas. On reaching this rank and height they will manifest their eight features to all living things in order to deliver them; and they will unceasingly turn the wheel of the wonderful laws in the land of purity and of unsurpassed magnificence. They will make all the living seek after paradise as they, and the Buddha before them, sought after it.

How joyful a life this must be! Life is like a



Worshiping the Buddha.



vision; like a dream. Why should we not cast away from us everything that relates to this lower world, and earnestly seek for birth into this paradise? You who are observers of the law and of the doctrine, do not be indolent in your endeavors! The Bodhisatva Ryūju has left the following words: —

“There is neither wrong principle nor evil understanding within the limits of the unfathomable desire of the Buddha. When within the limits of his desire there is nothing but progress in Buddhism possible for us. If we are once born into this paradise, we never backslide, but we make constant progress until we attain to Buddhahood. Because of this I worship the Buddha and pay him reverence. I also preach his merits, although they are as wide as the great and boundless sea. I desire to be born into his paradise through the purity of the good deeds that I have done, and of the merits I have accumulated. It is my strong desire that with all other living things I may be born into the Buddha's land of peace and delight.”

This description of the delights of the Buddha's paradise, although somewhat cloying through ex-

cess of sweetness and of similarity, of gaudiness and of glitter, is nevertheless surprisingly beautiful. It is true that many of the delights are such as appeal to the senses, yet there are none that are sensual. In this respect the Buddha's paradise is immeasurably superior in its conception to the paradise of Mohammed.

The Oriental imagination has clothed the supposed and the desired delights of paradise with the richest of ornamentation and of coloring, and has made what must have been for many generations a most attractive picture and object of ardent desire to the weary and oppressed masses of Asiatic lands. Many millions of people have no doubt gone through life and down into death cheered and comforted by this teaching.

The reverse of this enchanting picture is, however, as horrible and as outrageously abominable as the reverse of one thing to another can possibly be made. The descriptions of the eight hot hells, each having sixteen auxiliary departments, show imagination run mad, and set before us a series of pictures so hideous, so dreadful, and in every way so revolting that one cannot look on them without shudders of extremest disgust. The cruelest, the foulest, the most agonizing, and the most protracted

of tortures and of sufferings are set forth with a detail that shocks, amazes, and sickens the reader.

The Christian Scriptures have also something to say of the state of the soul after death, and they do not hesitate to speak of a possible and lurid future for some, as well as of a possible and most attractive one for others; but there is a reserve and a balance about their statements that we fail to find in the Buddhistic or in any uninspired utterances on the same subjects.

The common people, the masses of the lands where northern Buddhism has held sway for so many centuries, have ever accepted and fully believed that the Buddhistic teachings concerning the delights of the Buddha's paradise and the cruel horrors of the Buddhist hells represent the truth, and the assured facts in the case. It follows therefore that some millions may have been cheered and comforted in life and in death by the hope of rebirth into the land of ease and of superlative bliss, but many other millions have lived through all their lives and gone down to their graves under the burden, the fear, and the horror of a possible falling into some of the awful hells where the tortures and sufferings must be



endured without possibility of relief during infinite kalpas of time.

The more intelligent of the priests, however, and the scholarly laymen have always spoken of the same teachings as being but *hōben*, or fictional; nothing more, in fact, than a pious device which was exceedingly useful in bringing the masses into subjection and in holding them there.

A modern Japanese author says on this point: "Those who patiently investigate and understand the original and true teachings of the Buddha do not accept this 'fictional teaching' as representing the facts in the case at all. They regard the Buddha's paradise as being only a figurative statement of the condition of the heart of a true believer. The ignorant and the foolish only, being beguiled and misled, wander on in search of a heaven that does not exist, fearing a hell that has no reality."

Is not all this an apt and a sad illustration of the blind leading the blind, and of all falling into the ditch together? Do not these peoples need a Teacher who is wise and truthful as well as mighty to save?

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE BUDDHA'S ENLIGHTENMENT.

THE mysteries of life and of death; of the misery of some and the happiness of others; of the wealth and luxury of the few and the poverty and squalor of the many, and the probable future of all after death have ever been problems which have occupied the minds of the noblest and most thoughtful of all races of men.

Prince Siddartha belonged to this thoughtful class of humanity, hence he sought enlightenment concerning these deep problems, these profound mysteries. He sought it too in the best ways known to the men of his day and generation. He forsook all his luxurious surroundings, gave himself to the life of an ascetic and recluse, and devoted himself with persistent energy to such studies, austerities, and meditations as seemed to him best suited to bring about the intellectual enlightenment he so ardently desired.

#### I. THE PLACE.

It is not a matter of any vital importance in

itself as to where and how he ultimately obtained the object of his desire ; but it is very interesting to know that the two great schools or divisions of Buddhism, the Southern and the Northern, entertain entirely different opinions as to both the place where and the manner in which Buddha acquired his enlightenment. The Southern school affirms that ultimate enlightenment was obtained while he was seated crosslegged under a Bodhi tree. Sir Edwin Arnold in his poem *The Light of Asia*, in Book VI, sets this view of that school before us in the following language :—

He arose . . .

And bent his footsteps where a great tree grew,  
The Bodhi tree (thenceforward in all years  
Never to fade, and ever to be kept  
In homage of the world), beneath whose leaves  
It was ordained that truth should come to Buddh:  
Which now the master knew: wherefore he went  
With measured pace, stedfast, majestic,  
Unto the tree of wisdom.

The same school also says that the enlightenment came to Buddha ultimately after a fierce struggle with a series of mighty temptations. Sir Edwin Arnold expresses this view in the following language, in the sixth book already quoted from :—

Then fell the night even as our master sate  
Under that tree. But he who is the Prince  
Of darkness, Mara — knowing this was Buddh  
Who should deliver men, and now the hour  
When he should find the truth and save the worlds —  
Gave unto all his evil powers command.  
Wherefore there trooped from every deepest pit  
The fiends who war with wisdom and the light,  
Arati, Trishua, Raga, and their crew  
Of passions, horrors, ignorances, lusts,  
The brood of gloom and dread: all hating Buddh,  
Seeking to shake his mind; nor knoweth one,  
Not even the wisest, how those fiends of hell  
Battled that night to keep the truth from Buddh:  
Sometimes with terrors of the tempests, blasts  
Of demon armies clouding all the wind,  
With thunder, and with blinding lightning flung  
In jagged javelins of purple wrath  
From splitting skies: sometimes with wiles and words  
Fair sounding, mid hushed leaves and softened airs  
From shapes of witching beauty; wanton songs,  
Whispers of love: sometimes with royal allures  
Of proffered rule: sometimes with mocking doubts,  
Making truth vain.

The poem continues to give the details of these temptations and then says: —

But Buddh heeded not,  
Sitting serene, with perfect virtue walled  
As is a stronghold by its gates and ramps:

Also the sacred tree — the Bodhi tree —  
Amid all that tumult stirred not.

At length full enlightenment concerning the profound mysteries that the Buddha had been so long endeavoring to solve came to him with the breaking of the day, and at once all nature, animate and inanimate, together with the inhabitants of the air, united in rejoicing over the glorious event.

The Northern school, while it sets forth the fact of Buddha's having attained to the perfect enlightenment believed in by the Southern school, and of the congratulations given to him by Bodhisatvas and a vast host of others, seems to know nothing whatever of either an all-night sitting under the Bodhi tree or of the fierce and fascinating temptations urged on by spirits of evil under the command of a chief called Mara.

If the reader will turn to the chapter entitled "The Snow Mountain," he will at once see how entirely different the views of the Northern school as to the place and the circumstances associated with the occasion of the Buddha's enlightenment are from the views entertained by the Southern school about them. The place chosen by the Northern school for this transcendent experience

is a remote mountain, high, covered with snow, and bitterly cold. There is no temptation here, unless it be the one of curiosity to hear the uncompleted stanzas of a hymn uttered by a voice in some distant valley! It may be that the Northern school has thought that even the idea of temptability implied something derogatory to the fair name and noble nature of the Buddha and so has dropped that part out of the published lives. Then too, asceticism, and mountain retreats far from the confusion of worldly and fleshly strife, have always had an exalted place in the estimation of the Northern school. Japan and other countries where Northern Buddhism has held sway owe much of their interest to travelers to the massive temples, with their lovely grounds, which are located in mountain regions. The conjunction of the picturesque work of God on the one hand, and of the work of man on the other, has produced many an attractive and even enchantingly beautiful place well worthy of a visit from the traveler and the artist as well as the student of religions.

While preparing the manuscript for this book I have frequently interrogated priests and laymen of different Buddhist sects on the subject matter

of this book and have learned that "The Life" given in the preceding pages is used by all the sects in Japan. Not one of the gentlemen questioned has seemed to know anything of a Bodhi tree or of temptations experienced prior to enlightenment. They have almost invariably listened to my statement of the views set forth by the Southern school with some degree of surprise and with the suspicion, I fear, that I was not telling the exact truth. One intelligent layman, after expressing a good deal of regret that he was unable to answer some of the questions I had asked him, said that he really knew very little of Buddhism, although he had been from a youth brought up in that faith and was a Buddhist even yet, although he was nearly forty years of age.

A priest with whom I conversed only yesterday said that he knew of the different views entertained by the Buddhists of southern India and the Buddhists of Japan concerning the place and circumstances connected with the enlightenment of Buddha. It is highly probable, however, that this knowledge has come through recent visits of Japanese Buddhist priests to India and to Oxford University, England, for the purpose of the study of Sanscrit and of the religions of India under

the guidance of the eminent professor of Oriental learning, Max Müller.

It has been a matter of frequent surprise to me that men whose position, training, and ordinary intelligence would seem to point them out as persons amply qualified to give clear answers to the questions asked have been so seemingly ignorant and unable to give satisfactory replies. It may be that the reply of the chief priest of a great temple near my home, where a large number of young men are being prepared for the priesthood, is the only reply that can be given. He said: "You must not forget that the sacred books consist of five thousand and forty-eight separate productions. Buddha occupied forty-nine years of his life in giving instruction in his doctrines, yet he was unable even during that time to set forth his ideas to their fullest extent. If one should take the same number of years, and even double that number, for the mere intellectual study of the teachings, he would not be able to understand their profound significance."

"What then," I asked, "is to be done if one would attain to a full and clear understanding of the heart of the teachings of Buddha?"

The priest smiled and said: "The only way is



to enter the Order, become an ascetic, perform the appropriate austerities, sit immovably still with the limbs and feet folded under the body, for days and nights, months and years, and devote yourself to silent, abstract contemplation."

I then asked: "But what must one think about while thus engaged?"

The priest replied: "The condition of mind to be acquired is that of annihilation of all thought and all feeling. You must murder your own mind. Enlightenment comes after that condition has been reached."

"How long a time is it necessary to give to this endeavor?" was my next question.

The priest replied: "Five years? ten years? twenty years? a lifetime? The Buddha was engaged for twelve years in this ascetic and austere endeavor before he attained to enlightenment — and there are but few Buddhas!"

Christians speak of the profoundest truths of Christianity as being spiritually discerned, but it is evident that this language means clear soul-perception involving the highest activity of which the spiritual nature of the human mind is capable. The language of the Buddhist priest would seem to indicate the necessity of a spiritual discerning

of the truth of Buddhism, but with him this is to be attained, not by the vitally active use of the highest and best powers of the mind, but by their total annihilation.

This gives us a fair illustration of the resemblances and differences which exist between Buddhism and Christianity. Such likenesses as there may be here and there are entirely in the seeming, as is seen in this case of spiritually discerning the truth, in the incarnation and birth of Buddha,<sup>1</sup> in the weeping by the one wise old man out of the entire one hundred diviners, and who is spoken of by some writers as being like the aged Simeon of Luke's gospel (chapter ii, verses 25-32), and in other things. The differences also are as the differences which exist between light and darkness, between active intelligence and mental apathy and inertia, between life and death.

It is certainly true that of those whom I have questioned, both priests and laymen, all have invariably said that the place of Buddha's enlightenment was *Setzuzan*—the Snow Mountain. There is thus a clear difference between the Southern and the Northern school of Buddhists as to the place where and the circumstances in the midst

<sup>1</sup>See chap. iii : *Maya*, Prince Siddartha's mother.

of which Buddha received his enlightenment. As to the fact, however, they are at one.

## II. THE ENLIGHTENMENT.

With this point settled it seems desirable that something should be learned of the enlightenment itself. What did the Buddha come to clearly understand? In what did his enlightenment consist?

It would seem that the enlightenment he attained to was of a double nature, since the Southern school of Buddhism sets two features before us.

According to this school the first point concerning which Buddha received enlightenment was that life with its manifold experiences is but hopeless misery; that the cause of life is desire, a coveting of some supposed good not yet possessed; that desire, therefore, must be extinguished; and since desire is an outcome as well as the cause of life, life itself, the root of all evil and all misery, must be annihilated. All this the Buddha saw, and with it he learned the processes by means of which all desire and all life may be annihilated and escaped from. The processes are none other than ascetic austerities and abstract

contemplations. His heart being full of benevolence, he set out to teach what he had learned to all the people of southern India. He thus preached of the way of escape, or the way of deliverance, from the labyrinth and bondage of life, of rebirth and of desire by the exercise of the powers possessed by every individual. His enlightenment had not given him any knowledge of God, hence he has nothing to say of him in any of his teachings. He did not, however, preach "a way of salvation" in any sense in which that phrase is employed by Christian writers and speakers. He spoke only of escape and deliverance from the misery of existence.

Such for substance of doctrine is the first part of the enlightenment that Buddha received, and taught after his many years of ascetic austerities and abstract meditations.

The second part of his enlightenment is the one that the biography just read, and most other Japanese Buddhistic writings, present the most frequently and the most persistently to view, although the former one is not entirely ignored. According to these writings the Buddha arrived at the conclusion that all life, all senses, all desires, and all ideas are nothing more than illu-

sions, as unsubstantial and as unreal as dreams, as shadows, as the mirage of the desert. Mankind labors—according to his view—under the delusion that all these illusory things are realities. He also expresses it as his opinion that deliverance from the bondage and power of this delusion can be secured only through enlightenment, that is, by the clear perception that everything is nothing, and that emptiness and nothingness are the real and actual conditions of self, and of everything else in the universe. The ascetic austerities, strict observance of the commandments, diligent attention to the ritual, abstract contemplation, and faithful doing of all the things to which he taught his followers to pay diligent attention he regarded as being the only appropriate and adequate means for the enlightenment of the mind, the banishment of the delusion, and the acquisition of deliverance from the bondage and power of all illusion and its incident misery.

A few quotations from the biography and from other Japanese Buddhistic writings sets this before us very clearly.

In the chapter entitled “The Snow Mountain” Prince Siddartha is represented as looking toward

the south and seeing a thick cloud of smoke from which tongues of flame burst forth. In the midst of the smoke and flame he saw five hundred famished demons who appealed to him for help. The reply he gave them was the following: "Since thought is not, neither misery nor happiness have any master. Nothing is real; my own self even does not exist. Laws only are realities. Laws also are like a dream, like a vision, like a bubble of water, like the dew, like lightning. Understand this, I beseech you."

In the sacred book Kongo Kyo the following conversation between Buddha and one of his followers is reported:—

Buddha said to his disciple Monju: "From whence spring up the ideas of hell?"

Monju replying said: "All things without exception are the product of the vain human heart. People foolishly, according to the leading of their heart, bind themselves fast with self-made fetters. Because of this there is a hell, although no hell in reality exists. These people, being misled and self-bound, suffer and are in anguish just as if there were an actual hell. For instance, in a dream one has the feeling of falling into hell and of being consumed in the myriads on myriads of

fires, or of being thrown into the caldrons of boiling water and suffering untold agonies, and of screaming out in anguish and pain. If now such an one should be asked: 'Why are you so distressed?' he would reply: 'Oh, I am burning in the fires!' or, 'Oh! I am boiling in the caldrons of hell.' If on this the questioner should say: 'You are asleep and only dreaming,' and should then arouse the sleeper, how would it be? The awakened sleeper would at once perceive that the dream was but an unreal and empty thing, and then both mind and body would be at rest. Truly hell does not exist at all; yet if a person through bewilderment or self-delusion thinks he has fallen into one, or will fall into one, it is a mere matter of belief or fancy only. This is true, not of hell only, but of all other things as well: for all things are but emptiness and nothingness; all things, including the heart and mind of man, being as empty and unreal as a dream."

Buddha replied: "You have well said. All hells being so regarded, hell does not in reality exist at all."

In another sacred book, called the *Ryoga Kyo*, Buddha is reported to have made the following

remarks on the same subject: "*Hotoké*<sup>1</sup> is the I — the myself. From my first perception of the doctrine up to the entrance into Nirvana I have not interpreted a single verse or character of the sacred works otherwise; and now for the benefit of those who are deficient in wisdom and in power of patient perseverance I say that these principles are not of various discernments, but they are all one. That one is this: This my own body and the body of *hotoké* are one and the same, and both alike are nonexistences. I myself am *hotoké*, and *hotoké* is nothing but I, myself. I perceive, then, that I do not exist: I am not. *Hotoké* also is not. The east is not. The west is not. The north is not. The south is not. Having acquired this discerning mind, I understand that *ingwa* — retribution visited in the present existence for deeds done in previous state of being — is not. *Hotoké* also, all life also, are not. Even the perception of perplexity and bewilderment is not; for from within to the outermost limits of the ten sides of the universe there is nothing else but absolute vacuity and nothingness."

In view of this statement the Bodhisatva Ryūju

<sup>1</sup> *Hotoké* means saint, or one enlightened. Dead believers are usually called *hotoké*.



has said: "Man is not a witness even to himself." That is, being nonexistent he is incapable of testifying to or of himself that he exists or thinks or hopes or fears or suffers or enjoys!

In view of these two representations of life and of all that relates to it, it does not seem as though the enlightenment of the Buddha was quite so clear or so perfect as could have been wished. He seems to have fluctuated between realism and idealism. Some of his teaching — or the teaching of his followers, for it is not at all certain which it may be that we are reading — certainly regards life as being exceedingly real, full of misery, and to be escaped from even at the cost of the most austere and painful of ascetic endeavor; the transitoriness, the evanescence, the mutability and the general unreliability of everything only enhancing the misery of life and the importance of escaping from it.

Other of his teaching as certainly speaks of life and of all connected with it as being unreal, empty, vacuous, illusory. In this case it is the clear perception of the illusoriness of all things that is the condition of deliverance from its bondage and power.

Both phases of the teaching are set forth in the

chapter entitled "The Snow Mountain" in the address given by the Buddha to the ghoulish demon whom he saw exhume and horribly abuse and mutilate a dead body which he said had been his own in the causal stage of his existence and the cause of his rebirth as a demon.

The address is as follows: "The past and the future of life and of death are as dreams. From the beginning also all laws are naturally and of themselves extinguishable. Good and evil are both one and the same thing. The just and the unjust also are without any difference, the good and the evil, the just and the unjust being naturally alike, and all but as a gust of wind that suddenly sweeps over us and as suddenly passes away."

This, then, such as it is, represents the clear perception, the enlightenment ultimately attained to by the Buddha. It certainly leaves much to be desired. Yet after all, and as a matter of fact, the vitally important matter to Buddha was not, in all probability, so much the question as to whether everything within and without the individual is real or ideal, actual or illusory. The thing that concerned him the most was the endeavor to gain a way of escape and deliverance

from the fact or the seeming of reality and all the incidental misery. He believed that he received enlightenment on that point, and he gave his life, with a noble disregard of self, to the wide preaching of his discovery. The means of escape or deliverance he constantly and consistently sets forth as being the forsaking of the world with its appetites, fashions, and temptations; strict attention to his teachings, implicit observance of his commandments and ritual, entrance into the order of priesthood, ascetic austerities, abstract contemplations.

The final outcome of all this he affirmed to be — even though almost endless kalpas of time and innumerable births and rebirths in many or all the forms of life might be involved — clear perception, full enlightenment, escape, deliverance, Nirvana, utter annihilation, bliss.

It may be that to some strangely constituted minds the teachings of the Buddha seem equal, if not superior, to the teachings of the Christ; but to the mass of well-balanced Occidental minds it surely must ever seem that the religion of the Buddha is one of depression and of profound despair. Shadow, emptiness, transitoriness, illusion, nothingness are the gloomy, hopeless words

of the Buddha. Reality, vitality, hope, joy, infinite worth, endless life are the reviving trumpet words of the Christ.

The one speaks of hermit cells, of musty graveyard mold, of mountains of bones, and of silent tombs. The other speaks of the bridegroom and the bride, of spring flowers, of resurrection beauty, of joyous and abounding life forevermore.

The Buddha invites with the deep and solemn tones of yon distant temple bell to an entrance on the gloomy path that leads to a condition of senseless mental apathy, physical inertia, and eternal death. The Christ with the ring of hope and joy in his voice says: "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." "Come unto me, and I will give you life forevermore; for I am come into the world that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly."

The Buddha is the prophet of gloom, of despair, and of remediless death. The Christ is the prophet of life and of everlasting joy. Which of the two will you accept as Master and as Lord?

Which gives the preferable enlightenment, the preferable reward?

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!"

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### NIRVANA.

AFTER enlightenment — what? Nirvana! What is Nirvana? The question is more easily asked than answered. Scholars of Buddhism are not of one mind on the subject. With some Nirvana seems to mean that state of mental equipoise and calm which was entered into by the Buddha immediately after enlightenment occurred. With others it seems to mean an etherealized existence after death, an immortal condition of absence of desire, of endless, passionless, idealess calm. Others again think that Nirvana is absolute death, utter annihilation. In each case, however, entrance into the Nirvana believed in and set forth is regarded as conditioned by, or as the result of, a previous “enlightenment” acquired by ascetic austerities and abstract meditations.

One Oriental scholar, Ernest J. Eitel, PH.D., a well-known writer on Chinese Buddhism, says of this subject as follows: “In the absence of

ancient manuscripts, and by reason of the repeated textual alterations which the Buddhist canon suffered before it was fixed in the form in which we now have it, it is practically impossible to determine what Buddha himself taught on the subject. He *may* have looked upon Nirvana as a state of personal immortality, in which the spirit, exempt from the eddies of transmigration, revels in the enjoyment of unlimited happiness arising from the annihilation of all desire.

“On the other hand, he *may* have viewed Nirvana as a state of absolute annihilation of personality and individual existence. It is impossible to decide which of the two views Buddha actually held. But I incline to think he most probably left the question undecided in his own mind.”

This view of Dr. Eitel accords with what has already been said of Buddha's enlightenment as not being so complete and so clear as could be wished. We are left in uncertainty about his view of all nature. We do not know whether he regarded everything as being real, or whether he concluded that the realness was all in the seeming. Sometimes he speaks as a realist and sometimes as an idealist. At one time everything is miser-

able reality ; at another time everything is miserable illusion. In either case, however, enlightenment is the way of deliverance. When he speaks of Nirvana he leaves us in the same uncertainty, hence the differing views set forth by different sects of Buddhism and by different scholars of Buddhistic literature.

Professor Max Müller says of this doctrine as follows : “According to the metaphysical tenets, if not of Buddha himself, at least of his sect, there is no reality anywhere, neither in the past nor in the future. True wisdom consists in perceiving the nothingness of all things, and in a desire to become nothing, to be blown out, to enter Nirvana. Emancipation is obtained by total extinction.”

When conversing with the Buddhist priest spoken of in the previous chapter, I asked this question : —

“What is Nirvana ? ”

The priest replied : “If we say that it is a state of thought, actual or realized, we err. If we say that it is a state of absence of thought, we also err. If we say that it is a state of existence, we err. If we say that it is a state of nonexistence, we also err.”

“How then,” I asked, “can one who is desirous of knowing what the term means find out?”

The priest replied: “I know of but one way. It can only be learned in the same way in which enlightenment is acquired. You must forsake the world, enter the Order, become a priest, enter on a course of ascetic austerities and abstract contemplations, and then in the end you will learn what Nirvana means.”

The reply can hardly be regarded as a very satisfactory one, and yet it may be that no other could so well express the uncertainty that exists in the minds of so many Buddhists and students of Buddhism as to the real meaning of the term.

The meaning of the writer of the biography of the Buddha which the reader has just perused would seem to indicate that to him Nirvana meant annihilation. As he uses the term it is quite clear that he means more than mere physical death; for the ordinary term for death meant to him, as to others, nothing more than the cessation of the life of the body. If nothing more than this was involved in the Buddha's death and in the death of his followers, it does not seem probable that a new term would have been coined to express it. The soul, the real person, may continue to live,



move, and have its being, for weal or for woe, after it has parted company with the physical frame. This is a fact accepted by both ignorant and enlightened races. Mere physical death does not mean to the Buddhist — as the biography and all Buddhist literature go to show — extinction of being. All life, all desire for life, or all illusion concerning life are considered by the Buddhist as evils to be escaped from at the earliest possible moment. “Extinction is bliss;” hence if mere and ordinary physical death ended all, the Buddhist believer would be supremely happy. The “fear of the evil way of rebirth and of transmigration” rests on him like a nightmare. He desires to escape from the necessity of rebirth in the myriad possible forms of sentient life, and attain as soon as possible to such a state of mental equipoise, such a clear perception or enlightenment, and to such an accumulation of merit as will land him on the highest and last stage of existence in any form. This stage reached, after perhaps almost limitless periods of existence and of persistent endeavor throughout all those periods, the next death — or seeming death — is the final one, and ultimates in the absolute extinction of all sense, thought, feeling, and being, or of all illusion con-

cerning them. This condition would seem to be that which the writer of the biography indicates when he speaks of the Buddha as entering Nirvana. A brief review of some of his statements will suffice to clearly set this forth. It is not important that we should ask whether the statements made represent the facts in the case or not. The author uses the incidents as though they were facts, and so sets before us his opinion as to what the term Nirvana means.

The queen of Indra is represented as setting out from her abode in the heavens to see the dying Buddha, and as bearing with her a vial of the elixir of immortal youth. Although hindered in her attempt to reach the dying saint, she did what seemed to her the next best way of forwarding the vial to him. This plan also failed, as the vial caught on the branch of a tree and remained suspended there. The remedy failing to reach its destination the Buddha died. If now the queen of Indra had been supposed by the author of the biography to have had the least expectation that the Buddha would continue to exist in a possibly superior condition after his physical death, is it at all probable that he would have represented her as making the efforts she did to convey to him

before he died the elixir of immortal youth? The natural inference from the incident is that she regarded that death as a final extinction of being; and the author of the biography allows her act to convey that impression to the reader. If he had intended to convey any other meaning it would have been easy for him to have said that although the plan of the queen was frustrated by enemies who took the form of monster birds, yet that after his death his enlightened spirit would rise superior to all the enemies of his mortal life and frame, and would continue to live in a state of infinite equipoise and delight. As to this, however, he is absolutely silent.

This use of the incident, then, must be regarded as fairly teaching that the term Nirvana to the author of this biography meant absolute and total extinction of being when the death after enlightenment occurred.

The sally between Ananda and Kasho when the latter returned from his religious retreat and found kings of peoples, kings of demons, Arhats, wise disciples, great disciples, masses of people, representatives of the fifty-two kinds of reptiles, birds, and beasts assembled together and making great lamentation over some event, indicates the

same thing. Kasho asked for the reason of such a gathering and lamentation. Ananda is represented by our author as enraged at the question, and as replying that all present — kings, subjects, demons, reptiles, dragons, birds, and beasts — were met together for the sole purpose of lamenting the death of the Buddha.

Kasho on hearing this statement burst out into three fits of loud laughter. Shortly afterwards he gave his reasons for what to the heterogeneous multitude was shocking and unseemly hilarity.

The first reason he gave was that Arhats and disciples alike, although they had become acquainted during their forty-nine years of intercourse with the three great principles of the Buddha's teaching, were laboring under a misapprehension and a delusion. "You have now lapsed," he said, "from your lofty position as Arhats, and have fallen back to be common people again; and that is why I laughed the first time." The Buddha not only taught that all life is misery, he also taught that all life is illusion. Kasho would seem to have most clearly apprehended the heart of Buddha's teaching; hence Buddha's death, to him, meant nothing more than that vacuity had gone back into its original

nothingness! This being the case, there was nothing to lament about.

Another of the reasons he gave for his laughter he stated as follows: "The Buddha, uncreated and undestroyed, is now exhibiting the instability and evanescence of all things; and the fact that birth and death, being and extinction, are the laws of life — and that extinction is bliss."

This sentence sets before us the double teaching of the Buddha; namely, the doctrine of the illusion or nothingness of all things, and the doctrine of the extinction of being if life is indeed real. Whether Kasho accepted only one or both of these views we may not certainly know, but the language our author puts into his mouth at this time would seem to indicate that this the most eminent disciple of the Buddha had regarded this death of his teacher, this entering into Nirvana, as the absolute extinguishment of his being — body, soul, and spirit.

It is true that Kasho also said that the Buddha had entered Nirvana in order to learn whether his doctrines were rooted in the hearts of the Arhats and disciples; and that he was at that moment shedding tears of pity over them for their misunderstanding of his instruction. This, however,

would seem to be but a sarcasm similar in spirit to the expressions used when he gave the reason for his first fit of laughter. Kasho is certainly not represented as saying that Nirvana is anything other than extinction of being, since he says distinctly that "extinction is bliss."

Finally the Buddha is represented by our author as lifting up his hands out of the golden coffin and giving to Kasho and Ananda his garments, his begging bowl, and his sleeping mat. No word concerning the future, however, comes from his lips at this most fitting time. Having bestowed his gifts, "he closed the cover of the coffin and shut himself in. After this all within was silent and still"—and thus the record ends.

Our author as he uses the term, "Buddha enters Nirvana," certainly conveys to his readers the impression that that particular death was the absolute end of the Buddha.

In a work by a Japanese writer which was published a few years ago the statement is made that "in Buddhism taken as a whole there are two general lines of instruction, the one being called the fictional and the other the real, the true. To the intelligent, the patient, the persevering soul, the real, the true doctrine of

vacuous extinguishment is taught. To the ignorant and unpersevering the fictional doctrine of a paradise of bliss on the one hand, and of awful hells on the other, is taught." The "vacuous extinguishment" of this passage is the equivalent of the term Nirvana and stands for the last death and the final end of the truly enlightened and fully matured devotee.

The term Nirvana, standing as it seems to do for the actual and complete extinguishment of all illusion concerning life, or of the real life of both the body and the soul of the one who dies after he has attained to "enlightenment" through the medium of accumulated merits, ascetic austerities, and protracted, abstract contemplations, makes plain to us the infinite difference there is between the teachings of the Buddha and the teachings of the Christ concerning both the present and the future life of human souls. The teachings of the one represent chill and gloom, depression, darkness, despair, and irremediable death. The teachings of the other represent hope, cheer, light, life, and everlasting joy.

The one may be, as indeed he has been, the Light of Asia. His light also may have been, indeed it has been, a great good to many peoples.

At its best, however, it has been more like the light of the moon, clear, luminous, and cold, rather than like the sun, bright, glowing, and life-giving.

The moon stands as a fitting figure of Buddha, the Light of Asia. The sun stands as a no less fitting figure for Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

Jesus said of himself: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." These words set before every soul the possibility of acquiring the clearest "enlightenment" on the most momentous problems concerning life, death, and the future—an enlightenment the Buddha sought with all his heart, but did not find.

Jesus also said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." This is the assurance of the bestowal of an equipoise and calm of soul that would have rejoiced the Buddha in his day had he but known of, sought after, and come into possession of it.

Jesus further said: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."



This is ample assurance of a life of intelligence and of affection beyond the grave, the thought of which is as far beyond the hope or the despair of the Buddha as the east is far from the west or as the night is from the day.

The Christian thus acquires an enlightenment, an equipoise, a calm, and an entrance into a Nirvana (if one may be allowed to use that term to express the life of the Christian saint with his Saviour after the mortal has put on immortality) which is beyond all compare superior to the enlightenment, the equipoise, the idealess calm, and the Nirvana of the Buddhists.

The following lines will express the convictions of the Christian believer concerning Jesus — and by inference his opinion of the vital difference that exists between Jesus and Buddha. While every line is eminently appropriate when applied to Jesus, not a single one is appropriate or applicable to Buddha, no matter how devout or devoted, compassionate or noble, he may have been.

What Jesus is, Buddha is not.

Thou art the Way: to thee alone

From sin and death we flee:

And he who would the Father seek

Must seek him, Lord, by thee.

Thou art the Truth; thy Word alone  
True wisdom can impart:  
Thou only canst inform the mind  
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life; the rending tomb  
Proclaims thy conquering arm,  
And those who put their trust in thee  
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life;  
Grant us that Way to know,  
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,  
Whose joys eternal flow.

THE END.









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Atkinson, John Laidlaw,  
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